

6<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

# TRANQUILITY IN GAPYEONG

The Jarasum International Jazz Festival puts the world's best jazz musicians in a serene setting, with fresh autumn air and the colorful mosaic of Jara Island as a backdrop

# GROOVE

KOREA • Issue 72 / October 2012

www.groovekorea.com

## On the trail of Shamans

In the dark it is hard to see who comes and who goes. Scattered fires and candles reveal the small ceremonies taking place near the water. This beach is one of the most important pilgrimage sites for Korean shamans.

## Gangnam Style?

# NAH.

It is a place constructed of illusion, aspiration, financial speculation. The values embedded in the concept that underlie Gangnam are not Korean values, but Western.

## Real CHINESE food

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## Eat, Rest, Pay, Out

That's the translation of this restaurant's name. It's so popular (and cheap) that this is precisely what happens here

# MY KOREAN IDENTITY

Overseas Koreans explore their heritage

## The McCurry interview

Steve McCurry sat down with Groove Korea to talk about near-death experiences and his views of Korea and Asia. His exhibition "Between Darkness and Light" is on display

## Taking on the Hongdae establishment

New venue declares war against K-pop. They are open for the community. All genres and artists are welcome

## Daechan tea plantation

South Jeolla Province is filled with amazing sights and some of Korea's most authentic attractions. This new monthly feature highlights weekend trips around Korea

## The Busan Fireworks Festival

It's not only the most spectacular display of fireworks in Korea, it is surely one of the best in all of Asia

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48 Hour Film Project, Picasso at the Lapin Agile, HBC Fest, Zombie Walk



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## Groove Korea's 6th anniversary

➤ In your hands is the 72nd issue of Groove Korea. As we celebrate turning six this month, there's been a lot to be proud of over the years. Our pages have seen interviews with icons in Asia, from Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi, musician Amy Lee of Evanescence to photographer extraordinaire Steve McCurry in this issue. There have been so many more, but as influential as those people are, they don't really get us closer to Groove's *raison d'être*. We're still at it not because of the famous people we've interviewed — we're here because of community.

Groove is a magazine representing the community of expats in Korea, made for expats in Korea and by expats in Korea. Community fosters a sense of belonging — a key element to living a life of satisfaction. Finding your community is all the more important for people who are separated from their usual circle of friends. When family is a world away, community matters the most. You might find it at Craftworks' Wednesday quiz night. It could be your soccer team in the Seoul Sunday Football League or your Saturday afternoon language exchange. Groove is dedicated to bringing your community to Korea.

A lot has changed here in the 72 months we've been publishing, and the cultural mosaic that is Korea's foreign community is one of them. It's more diverse than ever, larger and spread more evenly across the peninsula. We're teachers, musicians, café owners, factory workers, writers, artists, husbands and wives; there are a million of us now and we come from all around the world.

Sometimes our stories will feature a community of artists in Itaewon or a sailing club in Busan. They might even direct you to a delicious sandwich joint in Haebangcheon or help you find somewhere to spend your weekend in South Jeolla Province. But we're also not going to back down from issues

that you need to know about just because they're controversial. Our pages mostly stand alone in that regard. So when MBC dedicated 4 minutes and 47 seconds of airtime to warn their audience on the dangers of relationships with foreigners, we responded with nine pages to rebut their portrayal of foreign men as diseased predators and Korean women as hapless buffoons. We put Rev. Daniel Payne of Open Doors Community Church on the cover without hesitation because we believe an open dialogue on homosexuality is the only way to defeat homophobia, which is still prevalent throughout Korean society. Another cover story featured Anti-English Spectrum, a group that stigmatizes foreign English teachers as dangerous and irresponsible; you have them to blame for your annual AIDS test. Then there are the thousands of foreigners who live here illegally; most are migrant workers from poorer countries in Asia whose Korean Dream came with an expiration date. They eek out a living to support their families abroad while living in fear of automatic deportation. That cover feature, "Living in the shadows," explored their story.

Of course none of this would be possible without the legion of dedicated writers, designers, photographers, editors, proofreaders and interns who work so hard to make each issue. There have been hundreds over the years. We sure don't do it for the money. It's a passion, a labor of love. (It's also a neurosis if you ask some people.) Dan Thwaites, Adam Walsh and Tracey Stark get credit for bringing us to where we are today. There have also been irreplaceable assets like Naheen Madarbakus, Liam Ring, Don Urban, Rob McGovern, Daniel Vorderstrasse and many others.

We do it for you, the casual reader, the serious reader, the advertiser, sponsor, critic and fan. We thank you for your support and participation. 🙏

**Hot on:**  
[www.groovekorea.com](http://www.groovekorea.com)

### Insight: Decoding the Real Name Transaction Law

In Michelle Farnsworth's final column for Groove Korea, she decodes the complexities of the Real Name Transaction Law. The Real Name Law, as it is sometimes called, is responsible for many banking policies and procedures in Korea. Once you understand the ubiquity of this law, you will be able to better understand the complexities of Korea's confusing banking regulations.

By Michelle Farnsworth  
Read it online in October or in print in November.

### Insight: Being a Muslim in Korea

Whether it's finding acceptable food, wearing a hijab and being stared at like a zoo animal, Muslims in Korea face unique challenges that most expats couldn't imagine. Some Muslims in Korea say that this is due to the low level of knowledge that Koreans have about Islam, though their numbers have been rising in recent years. History tells that Muslim traders first arrived in Korea as early as the 9th century, but it wasn't until the 20th century that Islam was reintroduced to the country. The Turkish troops that were stationed here during and after the Korean War began to educate Koreans about Islam when they established the Korean Muslim Society in 1955. Since then the Muslim community has grown rapidly, totaling some 40,000 people in Seoul today. Groove Korea met with two Muslim families and a working professional to talk about the daily life of a Muslim in South Korea — the challenges and the rewards.

By Lidia Okorokova  
Read it online in October or in print in November.

**Editorial by**  
**Matthew Lamers**

Editor-in-chief

Have something to say?  
[mattlamers@groovekorea.com](mailto:mattlamers@groovekorea.com)





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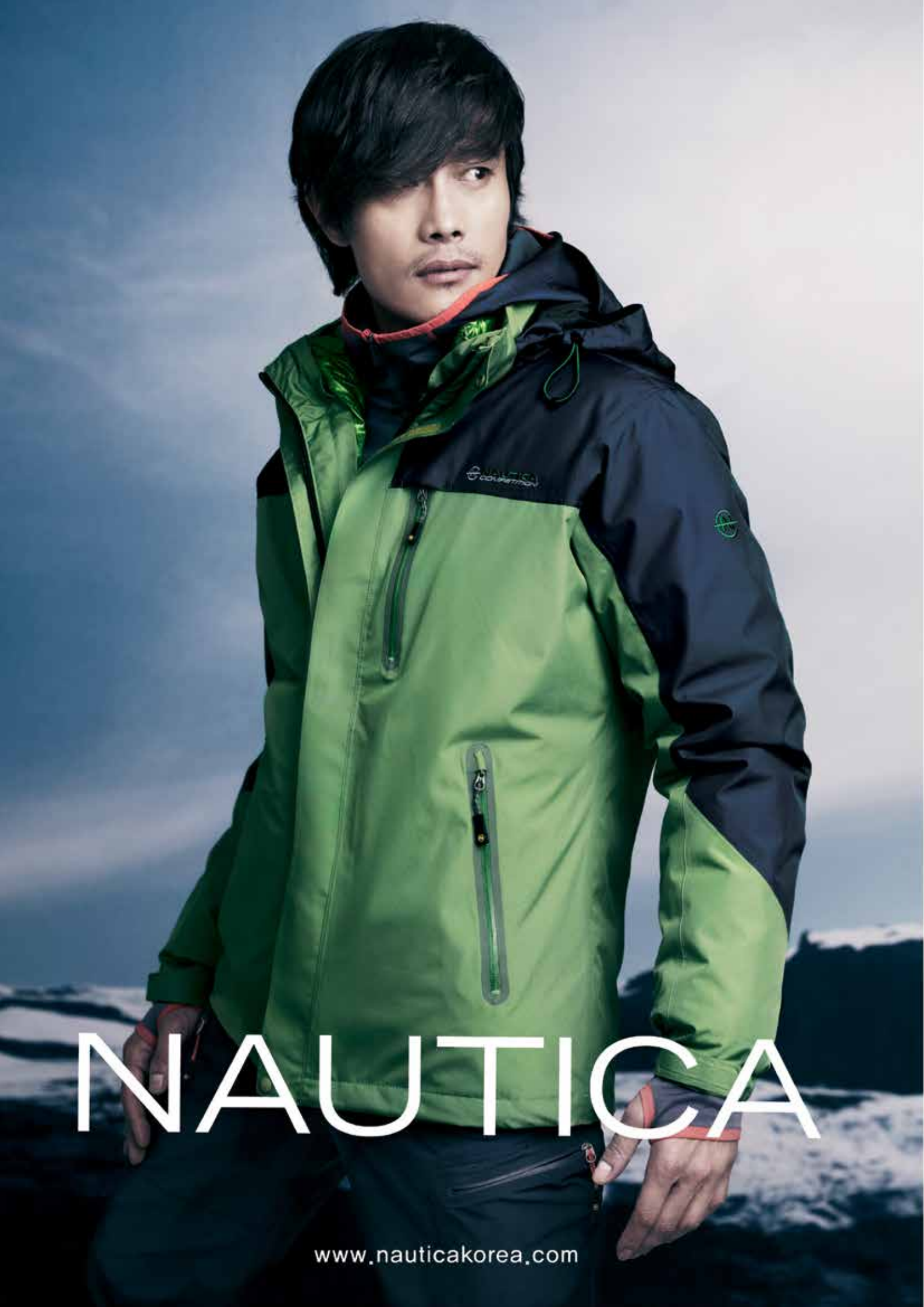
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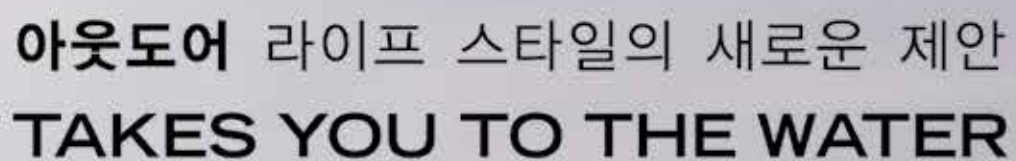




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## Connecting Communities

Introducing some of the contributors behind October's issue.



**Dean Crawford**  
U.K.

Dean watches a lot of films, which, roughly translated, means he's bit of a geek and spends a lot of time in dark rooms. He's from London, where he worked in the film industry, spending time on the sets of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" and "X-Men: First Class," among others. He is currently based in Jeonju. Dean contributes the Korean DVD Corner and At the Box Office.

**Jen Lee**  
U.S.

Jen is a Korean-American who resides in the city of Gwangju. She is currently working at an animation company while also doing work as a freelance artist whenever she can. Jen hopes to someday change the world with her silly drawings. When she's not working or trying to improve her skills, she can be found sleeping, watching cartoons or playing video games. Her current addiction is milk tea. Jen contributes the monthly comic strip Dear Korea.



**R.M. Adamson**  
U.S.

R.M. Adamson no longer lives or works in Gangnam. He currently resides in the Mapo District of Seoul, which is a real place that actually exists. He takes photographs for fun and writes long magazine articles only when absolutely necessary. His cat, Kwenchana Obama, thinks he's pretty cool most of the time. Read his blog at [www.thebobster.wordpress.com](http://www.thebobster.wordpress.com). He contributed "Gangnam Style? No such thing" to this month's Groove Korea.

**Ben Landau**  
Canada

Ben is a freelance culture writer from Toronto. Before moving to Seoul, he lived and worked in Osaka for a year. His interests include educational podcasts, basketball and the retroactive glorification of Steven Seagal films. When not writing/editing for Groove Korea, you can find him wandering Hongdae in lensless glasses. Follow his blog at [soimovedtojapan.tumblr.com](http://soimovedtojapan.tumblr.com). Ben is a contributing writer for Groove Korea.



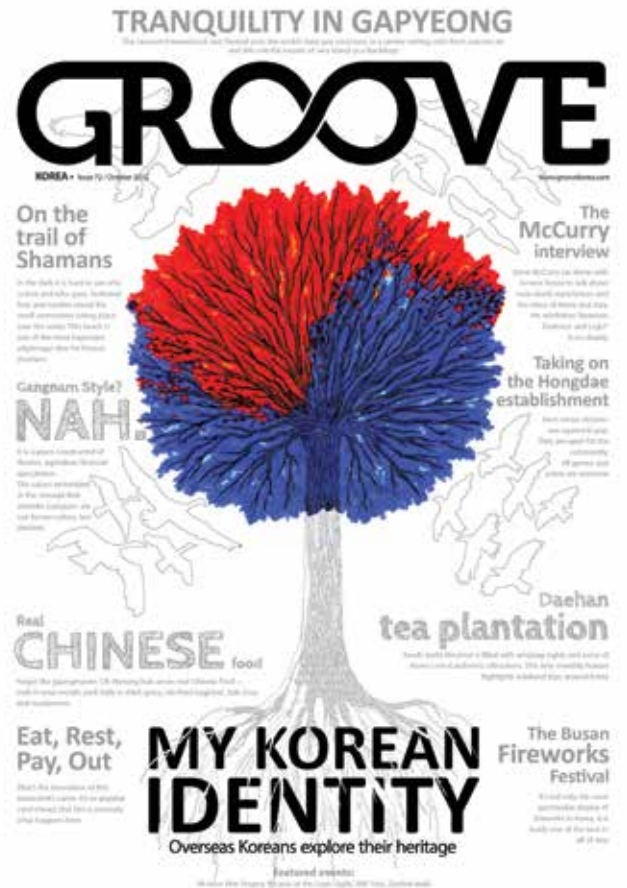
**Belle Nachmann**  
Australia

Belle is a photography enthusiast from Melbourne, Australia, where she was working for the federal government as a fraud investigator. When she got bored of being a suit in the corporate world she decided to come teach kids in Korea. She is also working on launching her own travel/photography website. Belle contributed an interview with photojournalist Steve McCurry for this month's issue.

## On the cover: Korean identity

Every year, Koreans from around the world make a pilgrimage of sorts to a homeland most had never visited. It's a journey of self-discovery — a search for self. For some, the discoveries are more nuanced, while others make life-altering realizations. However, not everyone finds what he or she is looking for.

See the full story on Page 30



Cover illustration by Antoni Sieczkowski / Design by Daniel Sanchez

### Our past three issues:



**September 2012**  
Eat Your Kimchi, Korea's dying markets, In memoriam: Kari Bowerman & Cathy Huynh



**August 2012**  
Korea's rail adventures, studying Korean, The streets of Seoul



**July 2012**  
Multiculturalism, Jisan Rock Festival, North Korean defectors

Check out past issues at  
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# Must Reads

## Pilgrimage of the Shamans

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When night falls, the atmosphere changes; the little tents that line the coast are actually "gutdang," or commercial Shaman shrines, where nightly Shaman rituals, or "gut," are held. The sounds of drums and gongs mix with the sounds of the sea and the recitative chant of the people who visit the beach on this night. In the dark it is hard to see who comes and who goes. Scattered fires and candles reveal the small ceremonies taking place near the water. This beach is one of the most important sites for Korean Shamans.



## Search for Korean identity

Page 30

Every year thousands of ethnic Koreans from around the world make a pilgrimage of sorts to a homeland most had never visited. It's a journey of self-discovery — a search for self. For some, the discoveries are more nuanced, while others make life-altering realizations. However, not everyone finds what he or she is looking for.



## Interview with Steve McCurry

Page 50

Steve McCurry sat down with Groove Korea to talk about working in war zones, near-death experiences and his views of Korea and Asia. His exhibition "Between Darkness and Light" is on display at the Seoul Arts Center in conjunction with UrbanArt until Oct. 21.



## 'Gangnam Style'? No such thing

Page 42

In Psy's song "Gangnam Style," he's not speaking even one syllable of unwanted truth to actual places of power in this country — the Blue House, the corporate-sponsored media based in Yeouido, the head offices of Samsung and Hyundai — but rather he's painting a caricature of the societal effects of those power structures, and the way people react to them.



## Real Chinese on the cheap: Seong Min Lamb

Page 90

Forget the jjajangmyeon. Oh Myeong-hak serves real Chinese food — melt-in-your-mouth pork belly in thick gravy, stir-fried eggplant, bok choy and mushrooms. And of course there's his restaurant's specialty: lamb. Big chunks of it, diced and skewered, ready to be roasted over open coals.



## Jarasum Jazz Festival primer

Page 66

This iteration of the Jarasum Jazz Festival is shaping up to be the best yet. Asia's biggest jazz showcase will take over the sleepy town of Gapyeong County, Gyeonggi Province, from Oct. 10 to Oct. 14. Groove Korea caught up with headliner the Jimmy Cobb, Larry Coryell, Joey DeFrancesco All Star Trio to talk about their first appearance in Korea.





# Groove's Inbox

What's on your mind? Share your thoughts on a Groove article: Did you love it? Did it suck? Are you planning a charity concert and want to spread the word? This is your page — get your message out!  
Facebook it; tweet it; e-mail it to [submissions@groovekorea.com](mailto:submissions@groovekorea.com)

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## Re: The rise of Eat Your Kimchi

I loved every sentence of this article.  
Eat Your Kimchi has been a haven for me for going on two years now. Being a pale, (apparently) big-eyed foreigner in the middle of Seoul also means that as amazing as my life is here, there are still many moments that my foreignness makes integrating into Korea difficult. Small things always seem to hit hardest, but because you want to leave negativity behind, you try to let it go. I have so much respect for Simon and Martina because their personalities are brave in this kind of society. I watch them pave the way for other foreigners to be accepted in their goofy and dorky ways without being misinterpreted as rude or disrespectful. They offer humor as well as seriousness, honest criticism backed up with solid and credible reasoning for both positive and negative views, and they are always aware of their audience (even the trolls). I can see why fans want to hug them and take pictures with them, I would do the same if and (hopefully) when I come across them someday. I also enjoyed this article which was well written and multifaceted. It matters so much to see the back story of the people that make my life a bit easier and brighter.  
— Hannah, Seoul

## Re: Taking the 'pop' out of K-pop

I think the authors are right. I'm a K-pop fan in Denmark, and there aren't many in my town. (As of now — four). K-pop is something most don't get, because they sing in Korean, and we don't get what they are saying. But like every other kind of pop, Korean pop songs are easy to sing along to and to dance to. I personally like K-pop because it is different from the "normal" pop.  
— Vaskelaff, Denmark

## Re: In memoriam: Kari Bowerman

Thanks to each and every one of you who wrote. It brings me a lot of joy that everyone who met her got to experience what an amazingly funny, energetic, kind and considerate person she was, not only to her family but to anyone she called a friend. She definitely picked her friends well.  
— Jenny Jaques

## Re: The state of post-rock in Korea

I don't even like Slint/noise/math/post-whatever, but when I heard Dogstar play "Goodbye, Home Run" at Lowrise Seoul, an echoey cube of hard angles and surfaces, it sounded so good I had a Shutter Island/Matrix moment in which I realized the world was an illusion and nothing was real except sound and Sunmi's dope hat. It was a pretty cool moment.  
— Mike Foley

 Facebook

## Re: Korea Beat

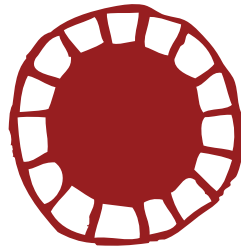
This is an inspiring issue, to say the least. James Little's story on Eat Your Kimchi was perfectly written. Elaine Ramirez's story on the tragedy of those poor women in Vietnam, Ms. Bowerman and Ms. Hyunh, is a reminder to everyone of the fragility of life. We should all be thankful for every day we live.  
— Miley Lewinsk

## Re: No foreigners allowed (to Itaewon bar)

I do have to say, opening an establishment in Itaewon of all places that doesn't allow "foreigners" is probably one of the dumbest things you can do and even makes me wonder if this is some kind of setup. I mean, really? In Itaewon?!  
— Kyle



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# EVENTS

October 1<sup>st</sup> - October 31<sup>st</sup>

## 1 - Monday

Food: Wing night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Mondays); <http://craftworkstap-house.com>

Festival: CIOFF World Folkloriada Anseong; Gyeonggi Province; Oct. 1-Oct. 14; 2012folkloriada.com

Festival: Jinju Namgang Lantern Festival; Namgang River Area, Jinju City; Oct. 1-Oct. 14; [www.yudeung.com](http://www.yudeung.com)

## 2 - Tuesday

Social: Pary in Hongdae with FriendsinKorea.com; 7:30pm; 5,000 won

Happy Hour: 2,000 won off martinis (all night) @ DOJO in Itaewon

Festival: Seoul Drum Festival; Oct. 2-Oct. 3; Seoul Plaza; [www.seouldrum.go.kr](http://www.seouldrum.go.kr)

## 3 - Wednesday

Festival: Pine Mushroom Festival; Namdaechon Stream, Yangyang-gun; Oct. 3-Oct. 7; [yangyang.go.kr](http://yangyang.go.kr)

Music: Yellow Monsters, The Strikers @ Sangsang Madang; 8pm; 25,000 won; [sangsangmadang.com](http://sangsangmadang.com)

## 4 - Thursday

Social: Quiz night @ 3 Alley Pub in Itaewon; win beer; [3alleypub.com](http://3alleypub.com)

Festival: Busan International Film Festival; Oct. 4-Oct. 13; [www.biff.kr](http://www.biff.kr)

## 5 - Friday

Happy Hour: 2,000 won off beer/wine @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong; 4-6 pm; [craftworkstap-house.com](http://craftworkstap-house.com)

Festival: Suwon Hwaseong Cultural Festival; Oct. 5-Oct. 7; [shfes.suwon.ne.kr](http://shfes.suwon.ne.kr)

## 6 - Saturday

Festival: Seoul International Fireworks Festival; Yeouido Hangang Park; Oct. 6; [bulnori.com](http://bulnori.com)

Music: Rodrigo Leao @ LG Arts Center; 7pm; 40,000 won and up; [lgart.com](http://lgart.com)

## 7 - Sunday

Soccer: Seoul vs Gyeongnam @ 5pm, Seoul World Cup Stadium; [kleague.com](http://kleague.com)

Musical: Last day of Wickid; 14,000 won; [wickedthemusical.co.kr](http://wickedthemusical.co.kr)

Festival: Andong Maskdance Festival; Through Oct. 7; Andong City, North Gyeongsang Province; [maskdance.com](http://maskdance.com)



Jazz festival: Story on Page 66

## 8 - Monday

Social: Open mic @ Tony's in Itaewon (Mondays); [tonysitae-won.com](http://tonysitae-won.com)

Food: Wing night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Mondays); <http://craftworkstap-house.com>

## 9 - Tuesday

Food: 2 For 1 fish & chips @ Wolfhound (Tuesdays); [wolfhoundpub.com](http://wolfhoundpub.com)

Lecture: Korea's Responses to AIDS by Sister Miriam Cousins; Residents' Lounge, Somerset Palace @ 730pm; <http://raskb.com/>

## 10 Wednesday

Social: Quiz night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Wednesdays); <http://craftworkstap-house.com>

Happy Hour: 2,000 won off glasses of house wine (all night) @ DOJO in Itaewon

## 11 - Thursday

Festival: Busan Jagalchi Festival; Busan Jagalchi Market, Busan; Oct. 11-Oct. 14; [ijagalchi.co.kr](http://ijagalchi.co.kr)

Happy Hour: All-you-can drink @ Big Rock in Gangnam; 25,000 won for Big Rock beer or 15,000 for OB; 7-10 pm

## 12 - Friday

Festival: Jarasum International Jazz Festival; Jaraseom Island, Gapyeong; Oct. 12-14; [jarasumjazz.com](http://jarasumjazz.com)

Happy Hour: 3,000 won off Orange Mint Mojito @ Noxa Lounge in Itaewon; 5pm-1am

## 13 - Saturday

Happy Hour: 3,000 won off Bloody Marys @ Noxa Lounge in Itaewon; 12pm-5pm

Festival: Herb Medicine Culture Festival; Yangnyeongsi Herb Market, Dongdaemun; Oct. 12-Oct. 13; [seoulya.com](http://seoulya.com)

## 14 - Sunday

Festival: Jarasum International Jazz Festival; Jaraseom Island, Gapyeong; Oct. 12-14; [jarasumjazz.com](http://jarasumjazz.com)

Food: Sunday Roast @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong; [craftworkstap-house.com](http://craftworkstap-house.com)



Fireworks festival: Story on Page 84

## 16 - Tuesday

Food: Pasta night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Tuesdays); <http://craftworkstap-house.com>

## 17 Wednesday

Festival: Ganggyeong Fermented Seafood Festival; Jeotgal Market, Nonsan City; Oct. 17-Oct. 21; [ggfestival.co.kr](http://ggfestival.co.kr)



Probationary Theatre: Story on Page 63



For suggestions or comments email Matthew Lamers: [mattlamers@groovekorea.com](mailto:mattlamers@groovekorea.com)

\*All the events published in this calendar are subject to unforeseen changes by the promoters. Groove Korea does not take responsibility for any misunderstandings or third party damage.

## 18 - Thursday

Festival: Jeonju Bibimbap Festival; Jeonju Hanok Village, Jeonju; Oct. 18- Oct. 21; [bibimbapfest.com](http://bibimbapfest.com)

Beer: Men's night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Thursdays); 2,000 won off single malts and 1,000 won off all beers

Social: Open mic @ Orange Tree in HBC (Thursdays); (02) 749-8202

## 19 - Friday

Festival: Namdo Food Festival; Suncheon City, South Jeolla Province; Oct. 19-Oct. 21; [namdofood.or.kr](http://namdofood.or.kr)

Film: 48 Hour Film Project; Oct. 19-21 (deadline Oct. 9); 200,000 won per team; [48hourfilm.com/en/seoul](http://48hourfilm.com/en/seoul)

Music: Cannibal Corpse @ AX-Korea; 730 pm; 88,000 won; [ax-korea.co.kr](http://ax-korea.co.kr)

## 20 - Saturday

Exhibit: Steve McCurry photography @ V-Gallery, Seoul Arts Center thru Oct 21; [sac.or.kr/eng](http://sac.or.kr/eng)

Theatre: Picasso at the Lapin Agile by Probationary Theatre @ White Box; Oct. 20, 27; 8pm; [probationary-theatre.com](http://probationary-theatre.com)

Exercise: Join British Army Fitness in Korea on their Saturday morning bootcamp @ Namsan Park in Itaewon; 8:30am

## 21 - Sunday

Food: Sunday Buffet Brunch @ Big Rock in Gangnam; 11,000 won; [bigrockbeer.co.kr](http://bigrockbeer.co.kr)

Music festival: Grand Mint Festival @ Olympic Park, Seoul; The Black Skirts, Delispice, Mongni, 10cm etc.; 88,000

Theatre: Picasso at the Lapin Agile by Probationary Theatre @ White Box Theatre; 21, 28; 4pm; [probationary-theatre.com](http://probationary-theatre.com)

## 22 - Monday

Food: Wing Night @ Big Rock in Gangnam; 500 won/wing; [bigrock-beer.co.kr](http://bigrock-beer.co.kr)

Beer: 15,000 won all-you-can-drink beer @ Beer Garden, Renaissance Hotel, Gangnam (daily, 6-9 p.m.); (02) 2222-8630

## 23 - Tuesday

Food: Wing night @ 3 Alley Pub in Itaewon; [3alleypub.com](http://3alleypub.com)

Lecture: Migrants: the Making of Multicultural Society by Daisy Y. Kim; Residents' Lounge, Somerset Palace @ 730pm

## 24 Wednesday

Beer: All-you-can-drink beer @ Ssada! Maek Ju in Hongdae; 8,000 won (every day); (02) 3141-7011

Learn about Korea's cuisine with O'ngo culinary tour of Seoul; [ongofood.com](http://ongofood.com)



48 Hour Film Festival: Story on Page 58

## 25 - Thursday

Happy Hour: All-you-can drink @ Big Rock in Gangnam; 25,000 won for Big Rock beer or 15,000 for OB; 7-10 pm

Social: Open mic @ Orange Tree in HBC (Thursdays); (02) 749-8202

Exercise: Join British Army Fitness in Korea & Hash House Harriers on their Thursday evening run; [bafik-bootcamps.com](http://bafik-bootcamps.com)

## 26 - Friday

Music festival: Howlin' Weenie Fest (aka HBC Fest); Oct. 26-27 in Haeboncheon; [hbcfest.com](http://hbcfest.com)

Fireworks; Busan Fireworks Festival: Oct. 26 - 27. See page 84 for more information.

## 31 Wednesday

Tour: Moonlight Tour at Changdeokgung Palace, Seoul; 10pm; <http://tinyurl.com/8b6582t>

## 27 - Saturday

Halloween party: All-You-Can-Drink Han River Boat Cruise from Ka~brew; 5:30 pm-9; [halloweenrivercruise@gmail.com](mailto:halloweenrivercruise@gmail.com)

Halloween party: Halloween Cruise Bash 2012 on a ship in the West Sea; 8pm-12pm; 70,000 won; [jgb-sam@hotmail.com](mailto:jgb-sam@hotmail.com)

Halloween party: 3rd Annual Zombie Walk @ Seoul Forest-Hongdae; 6pm; [www.facebook.com/little.t.korea](http://www.facebook.com/little.t.korea)

## 28 - Sunday

Beer: Beer buffet @ 200 Bran Hauns; 9,900 won; Mon, Thurs, Sun at 5 pm; (02) 3481-9062

Theatre: Picasso at the Lapin Agile by Probationary Theatre @ White Box Theatre; Oct. 21, 28; 4pm; [probationarytheatre.com](http://probationarytheatre.com)

Self-help: Overeaters Anonymous meeting @ the International Lutheran Church; 7:30 p.m.

## 29 - Monday

Exercise: Join British Army Fitness in Korea on their Monday evening bootcamp @ Namsan Park in Itaewon; 7:30pm

## 30 - Tuesday

Food: Half price fish & chips @ Big Rock in Gangnam; 500 won/wing; [bigrockbeer.co.kr](http://bigrockbeer.co.kr)



Steve McCurry exhibit: Story on Page 50



# Korea Beat

## National News

All stories translated by Nathan Schwartzman at [www.koreabeat.com](http://www.koreabeat.com) and edited by Groove Korea for length and clarity. The opinions expressed here do not represent those of Groove Korea. — Ed.

### In Korea, a fast-changing concept of marriage

➤ Han Ju-yeol, a 39-year-old office worker, and Lee Su-yeong, a 35-year-old insurance saleswoman, consider themselves married, even though they have never formalized the arrangement on a marriage certificate. They have both experienced failed marriages. Han's marriage ended over personal differences, and Lee's ended due to her husband's unfaithfulness.

"We had two many wounds from getting divorced ... if they healed we could get legally married, but we like the way things are," they said.

They are part of a growing trend of couples living together without a marriage certificate and couples having children out of wedlock.

The number of children born out of wedlock rose 3.3 percent in 2011 year-on-year, to 9,959, according to the National Statistical Office. That is the highest since figures began being kept in 1981. In 1997 such births comprised 0.6 percent of the birth rate, rising to 2.1 percent in 2011. Kim Yeong-cheol, a research leader at the Korea Development Institute, said that "the traditional, conservative institution of marriage is weakening."

Kim Seong-jin, 27, and Park Jaehui, 23, aren't just like any other couple on campus. They have lived

together for the last two years and had a child together in March. "When the pregnancy test came back positive, we thought of getting an abortion," said Park. "(But) I couldn't bear the idea." Kim's parents are currently looking after their healthy daughter. Mindful of social prejudices, they said they will get a marriage certificate after obtaining employment.

The National Statistical Office does not track the number of households consisting of unmarried, cohabiting couples when it conducts its census. In Korea, there is no such thing as "common law" marriages.

Perspectives on these relationships are changing. In 2010 the NSO found that 53.3 percent of those aged 15 to 24 agreed with the statement "men and women can live together even if they are not married." In April the online polling company Dooit Survey published a study in which 2,513 adults were asked: "Is it good to cohabit before getting married?" Sixty percent said yes.


"With people marrying later and sexual freedom expanding, cohabitation has become natural," said Lee Mi-Jeong, a research leader at Korea Women's Development Institute.

More women who have children out of wedlock are choosing to raise their children on their own, according

to the Korea Women's Development Institute. In 1998 only 7.2 percent of single mothers raised their children out of wedlock, but that rose to 66.4 percent in 2009.

Abortion and adoption — for decades Korea's way of dealing with out-of-wedlock children — are becoming less prevalent, the KWDI found. Byeon Hwa-sun, head of the Family Life Research Institute, said, "In the past, marriage and pregnancy were absolutely equated ... Now, more and more women believe they can raise a child by themselves."

The government has also opened up more channels of support for women, with the Single-Parent Family Support Act, the Domestic Relations Act, the Medical Insurance Act and the Act on Special Cases Concerning Adoption, although programs remain exclusive for married couples.


"We must create a society in which children can be raised in a healthy environment," said Kang Hak-jung, head of the research institute Home 21. "Long-term social instability rises when social benefits are denied to those in de facto marriages, to cohabiting couples and to homosexual couples." 

### Judges more lenient than juries: survey

➤ Five years since the start of the citizen jury system, a study has found that juries hand down sentences for sex offenders that average eight months longer than those of judges. Unlike judges, who tend to be lenient on drunk men, jurors have been less inclined to reduce sentences for those who commit crimes while intoxicated.

And when deciding the guilt or innocence of the accused, jurors have been found to demand clearer evidence than do judges. These findings come from researchers who studied 546 cases tried before juries in the past five years, involving 569 victims and 4,282 jurors.

The study found that jurors in sex crime cases gave prison sentences of 68.1 months on average, compared to the average sentence of 59.9 months given by judges.

In the cases of murder, assault and robbery, jury sentences were 1.5 months longer. 

### In Brief

#### Taxi drivers busted for selling passengers' phones

A group of taxi drivers has been caught hoarding smartphones forgotten in taxis in order to smuggle them overseas.

The Jeju Provincial Police Agency is investigating six people, including 32-year-old "Mr. Kim" of Daegu, who is accused of receiving stolen goods, and 31-year-old "Mr. Lim," who is accused of acting as a middleman. The court did not release their full names, in accordance with Korea's strict defamation laws.

According to police, Mr. Kim, a dealer in stolen goods, purchased over 410 smartphones worth 330 million won (\$291,200) which had been left in taxis driven by Mr. Lim and others, then resold them to smugglers.

Mr. Kim would pay 20,000 to 150,000 won for each smartphone, and then sell them for a 20-40 percent markup, investigators found.

Mr. Kim used a forged Chinese passport

to avoid detection by police.

When police arrested Mr. Kim they found 18 smartphones worth 16 million won, and found another 41 smartphones and tablet PCs worth 42 million won.

Police are investigating another 75 people they believe to be connected to the scheme.

"Most of the victims lose the phones while intoxicated and do not remember what happened, or remember what hap-

pened but receive no answer when attempting to call the phone, and so they give up," said Goh Sun-chang, head of the international crimes division of the JPPD. He speculates that the number of victims would fall through more active reporting.



## Sex offenders may be prosecuted despite 'blood money' settlements

➤ The national government is considering a proposal to make sex offenses punishable even in cases where the victims do not express such a desire to police agencies. Seoul is also considering a controversial proposal to give judges the option to order chemical castration for sex offenders, pending further study of its effectiveness.

Gwon Hae-jin, head of the Ministry of Justice, discussed sex crimes policies with the Dong-A Ilbo in an interview in Gwacheon.

"We are now considering allowing prosecutors to press charges against sex criminals in cases when the victim doesn't file a complaint," said Minister Gwon. This is the first time the ministry has publicly addressed making the prosecution of sex crimes not subject to complaint.

In Korea, most sex crimes are off the books, as the families of the victim reach a financial settlement with the predator — an arrangement known as "blood money."

If the requirement of a complaint is removed, investigative agencies will be able to bring offenders to court even without a stated desire for doing so by the victim, giving the government a more active role in dealing with sex crimes.

Minister Gwon also address

chemical castration. "Although there remain doubts about the human rights implications and effectiveness of pharmaceutical treatment, after an investigation of its effects on re-offense rates we may expand its use to all sex offenders."

Regarding the expansion of the sex offender disclosure list to all numbered lots, eup, myeons and dongs, Gwon said the ministry is supporting a proposal to expand the posting of sex offender registration to all local government central offices.

"We cannot just ram through these proposals," the minister said. "We must proceed with caution. We must not advance recklessly, but rather use the recent group of terrible crimes as a gauge for the debate, focusing on these proposals." 🗣️

## Politician wants sex offenders castrated

➤ A recent wave of sexual offenses against young girls and women has sparked a movement to crack down on sex offenders.

Rep. Park In-sook of the ruling Saenuri Party, a former cardiologist, has called for surgical castration of sex offenders to prevent re-offense. She said removing their testicles would remove their sex drive and suggested that the procedure was simple and inexpensive, and did not even require an anesthetic.

Observers have supported her claim that castration would deplete most of the sex drive, but some say the procedure would be inhumane, as the offender would have to be conscious of the consequences for the rest of his life.

Some argue that such a consequence is a small price to pay for the damage, physically, emotionally and psychologically, that the child victims faced.

Others say the castration would have limited effect, as the desire to doesn't always come from a sexual need. Some offenders act out of the need for power or misogyny. In the case of pedophilia, offenders often watch a lot of child porn before their offense, and act out of an irresistible urge that is not hormone-driven, but sadistic.

The recent anger was sparked by the case of a 23-year-old man who admitted to abducting a sleeping 7-year-old girl of a woman he knew from their home in South Jeolla Province while intoxicated, then brutally raped her and left her under a bridge just 300 meters away from her home.

Another 23-year-old man sexually assaulted a 15-year-old girl in early September. After their discovery, the parents of the offender persuaded him to confess his crime, but since their son's arrest, the extensive media coverage has been tearing the family apart, the father said.

"Our son went wrong, and now our entire family is about to break down. Please spare my family," 55-year-old father said. 🗣️

## In Brief

### International schools face more oversight

The Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education will set up a system to monitor allegations of corruption in admissions at international schools in Korea, in collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Education, and Technology and the Offices of Education in Incheon and Gyeonggi Province.

The schools for foreigners have broad rights of academic freedom regarding curricula, hiring of teachers, facilities and ac-

counting, but are subject to strict regulations regarding the recruiting of students.

A presidential directive limits the admission of Koreans to those who have been resident overseas for a three-year period, and they may not comprise more than 30 percent to 50 percent of total admissions. However, there have been no rules for detecting violations.

There are now 22 foreign schools in the Seoul metropolitan area.

"Since there is no basis in the law to do anything about schools found to be in violation, the effectiveness of the studies may suffer," said an official with SOME. "There is an urgent need for systemic reform regarding the guidance and oversight of these schools."

National Assembly Representative Kim Tae-won of the New Frontier Party released statistics, according to which nine out of 49 foreign schools in Korea had

student bodies with Koreans exceeding 30 percent. Foreign students outnumbered Korean students in just 12 of the schools.

At one school the total yearly tuition including lesson fees, admissions fees, and dormitory fees exceeded 38.93 million won, and at another, the fee for lessons alone was 24.62 million won, Rep. Kim said. He called them "schools for aristocrats."



# Pilgrimage of the Shamans

The underwater tomb of King Munmu the Great

Story and Photos by Dirk Schlottmann









## Gyeongju, North Gyeongsang Province —

➤ When the day comes to an end and the tourists and families slowly gather their picnic baskets and head home, the small stony Bonggil Beach in Gyeongju, North Gyeongsang Province, is almost deserted for a short period of time. Only occasionally, some people can be seen praying, bowing toward the open sea to a few rocks. These rocks, about 200 meters off the coast, form a narrow rocky hill. They house the underwater grave of King Munmu the Great.

The Underwater Tomb of King Munmu — Daewangam, Historic Site No. 158 — is, at first glance, an unremarkable formation of rocks.

Appearances can be deceptive.

When night falls, the atmosphere changes; the little tents that line the coast are actually “gutdang,” or commercial Shaman shrines, where nightly Shaman rituals, or “gut,” are held. The sounds of drums and gongs mix with the sounds of the sea and the recitative chant of the people who visit the beach on this night.

In the dark it is hard to see who comes and who goes. Scattered fires and candles reveal the small ceremonies taking place near the water.

This beach is one of the most important pilgrimage sites for Korean Shamans — especially during a full moon or on certain days of the lunar calendar — and a popular place of worship for Buddhists. The reasons for that lay in the myths and legends that entwine the death of the famous king.

### The legend of Munmu

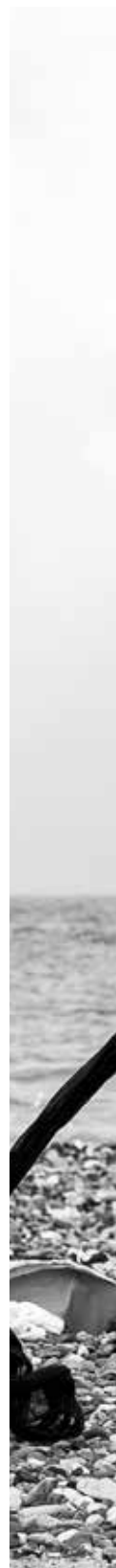
King Munmu the Great was the 30th king of Silla (57 B.C.-935 A.D.). He was born to King Muyeol and Queen Munmyeong under the name Prince Bubmin, and took the name King Munmu when he ascended the throne in 661.

During King Munmu's reign, he was able to subdue the neighboring Baekje and Goguryeo kingdoms and free the kingdom of Silla from the domination of the Chinese Tang Dynasty. King Munmu is also usually considered the first king of the Unified Silla.

After he had ruled for 21 years, King Munmu felt the approach of death. On his deathbed, he wished to have his body burned and the ashes scattered on a rock in the East Sea. It is said that after his death he wanted his spirit to become a dragon in order to prevent an invasion of Japanese attackers for all eternity. Those last words of the king were a surprise for the people of Silla — because it was customary for kings and nobles to be buried with treasures and other valuables in large tombs, the idea of cremating was deemed unacceptable and inappropriate.

Nevertheless, King Sinmun fulfilled his father's wish and scattered the ashes in the East Sea. According to historic accounts, a temple called Gameunsa was built by King Sinmun to pay tribute to his father, who had become the mythical guardian dragon.

Older Shamans visit Bonggil Beach as a place for religious worship, to perform small ceremonies and to collect “qi.” During intense ritual periods, they use the rest periods to visit places in Korea that are regarded as spiritually pure or invigorating.







An elderly Shaman swings this long black cloth to free it of knots. In a metaphorical sense, she also tries to free herself from the nodes.











King Sinmun often visited the underwater grave, which was said to be the first of its kind in the world. One day, a dragon appeared to the king in the sea and gave him a jade belt and a bamboo flute called Manpasikjeok. This legendary bamboo flute had the magic power to repel enemies and heal the sick, bring rain in times of drought and protect against floods. (This episode is handed down in the legend of "The flute that can calm ten thousand waves," in the Samguk Yusa, or Stories of the Three Kingdoms).

#### Shamans at Bonggil


For Korean shamans, the grave at Bonggil Beach is the place where they ask the guardian spirit for help and advice and where they contact other water spirits. Yongwang (the dragon god), for example, is an indispensable god to Korean Shamanism. Alongside Sansin (the mountain god), Yongwang is one of the Earthly gods. These Earthly gods are responsible for procuring descendents, national security, health and rain.

Older Shamans visit Bonggil Beach as a place for religious worship, to perform small ceremonies and to collect "qi." To cultivate qi, to clean and "re-charge" their spiritual powers, is an important activity for all Shamans. During intense ritual periods, they use the rest periods to visit places in Korea that are regarded as spiritually pure or invigorating.

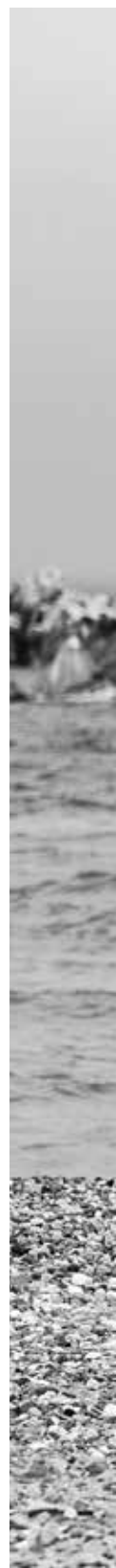
This kind of prayer, however, is not a privilege for Shamans and so visitors and residents from the surrounding villages can very often be seen praying to the gods and spirits to fulfill their wishes and requests.

Younger Shamans, so-called "sindall," who are preparing their initiation ritual, or "naerim gut," are very easy to recognize. They pray in this place for strength and help. These often tearful and intense ceremonies, which can last until dawn, are an emotional roller coaster ride that balance lamentation, fear, request and hope.

Occasionally, one can observe praying monks in their grey robes. In Korean Buddhism the Dragon God (Yongwang, the Dragon King) is an important deity of the Pantheon. Temples near the coast often have their own shrine, Yongwang-dang, devoted to this deity. As a Buddhist deity, Yongwang is in charge of rain and water, and controls the storms. He also protects the Dharma.

When the dawn slowly reddens, and the sky and the first birds announce the sunrise, the chanting will, in this last time, become a little louder and the drums more intense. But when the day breaks and early risers get up to enjoy the sun's rays on the promenade, the spiritual activity comes to an end. The beach belongs again to fishermen, tourists and families. 

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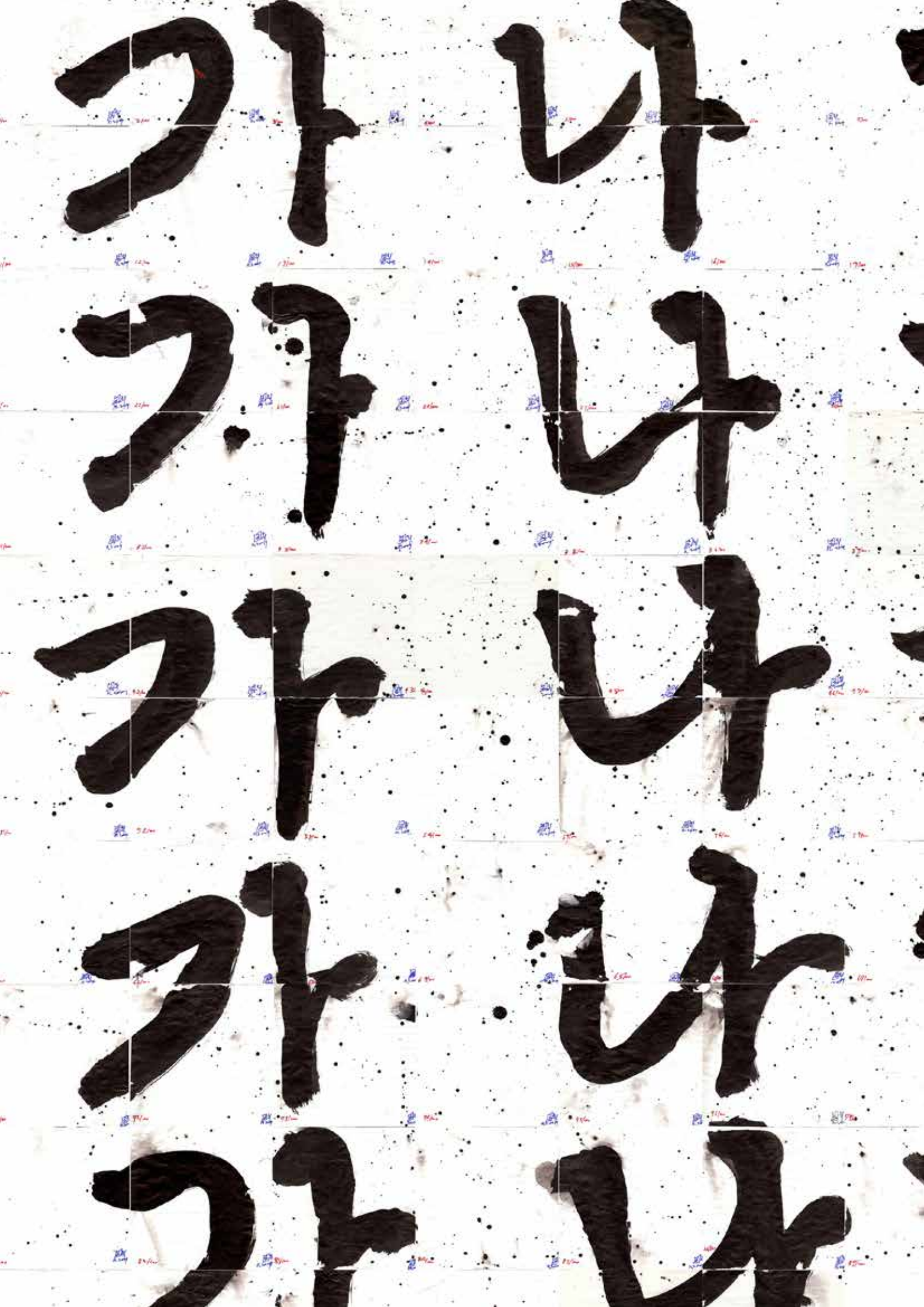






A woman shows her respect to the gods by bowing in all four directions before starting her prayers.









# A life not lived

The search for a Korean identity

Story by Jenny Na / Artwork by Mihee-Nathalie Lemoine

➤ It always starts in the eyes. A question formulated in the back of the mind that works its way up to the surface until it practically begs for escape. They want to know what you are.

I've spent a lifetime trying to answer that questioning gaze and have failed on so many levels. That's what happens when the package doesn't match the contents and everyone, mostly me, feels as if they've been sold a false bill of goods.

When I look in the mirror, the person staring back is a strange Korean I don't always recognize as myself. She has brown skin, small almond eyes and dark hair, which doesn't match the image I have in my head of a girl with pale white skin, round eyes and dark reddish-brown hair. Though she has receded a bit over the years, I can't seem to shake her off. She's always there, lurking in the shadows. I manage to forget the Korean woman as long as nobody mentions it, but they always do. Whether the question remains unformed and locked in the eyes or comes spilling out as sound, it echoes in my head long after the encounter simply because that other girl just won't go away.

I don't think I've ever felt comfortable in my own skin, but that doesn't mean I've stopped trying to make it work. Growing up as a Korean adoptee in rural Minnesota, I was almost always the only Asian around and the boys on the playground made sure I knew it. Here in Korea, I can slip through a crowd virtually unnoticed until I open my mouth. And when I do, I can feel the awkwardness of who I am return.

I return to these questions now because summer is the season of adoptees, interns and fellows in Korea. Every year around this time, hundreds of hyphenated Koreans make the trip here from the Western countries where they've grown up, live or go to school. We are returning in ever larger numbers and many more of us are staying. We're choosing to make a life here despite circumstances that can be at once joyous and devastating. There is joy in the sheer number of discoveries large and small, and devastation in the amount of damage it can do to identities-in-progress.

I've seen enough friends – adoptee, mixed Korean and *kyopo* – take this journey to wonder what it is that makes us return, and to ask why we stay. Or maybe, with a tenth year here on my horizon, I wonder why I'm still here. Home, though, is an ambiguous concept for me and I'm not sure that I know where it is. Before coming here, I made my homes in Minnesota and New York, with a short stay in France. But I've never really felt like I belonged anywhere and I've always felt like there was something missing.

O Canada Puzzled Web (2009)





*Circles I, 2000 (collection privée Washington DC)*



I came to Korea because I also felt that there were pieces of myself that I could only reclaim by coming here, to see where in the landscape of Korean-ness I might belong. I didn't have many illusions about it, but in the back of my mind I desperately wanted it to fit.

Still, I avoided it for a long time. It was like a box I didn't want to open and my upbringing had shown me that sadness, frustration and loss were all part of the package.

### Body of identity

People often ask how or when I knew I was different and if I knew I was adopted. To me, the answer is obvious, because the majority of people around me had always been white, including my family. I had two Caucasian parents and a Caucasian brother who was my parents' biological child and I spent my childhood and adolescence in majority Caucasian communities of less than 3,000 where Asians were scarce or nonexistent.

The defining feature of the town where I lived the longest was the decaying main street that stretched for a sleepy block down a cement road past buildings that were either crumbling remnants of the town's 19th century past or cinder block constructions that look like they were built in the '70s. The town was populated by proud immigrant families of Polish, German and Scandinavian origin, and by others of ambiguous descent.

I tried for a long time to play "white," but it seemed that no matter where I went — and until I could drive, the boundaries were defined by where my bike would take me — there was no escaping my difference, whether I chose to acknowledge it or not. But I knew. I knew something was off because of how everyone always looked at me. The color of my skin, the slant of my eyes, the impossible straightness of my hair betrayed me every time.

I grew up with this definition of my physical identity encasing my being like a straightjacket, even if it didn't match my own growing recognition of my racial identity.

I also grew up in an era where parents, including mine, were taught to assimilate their adopted children, which meant that you ignored race, identity and adoption and pretended that your child was just like you. As long as no one talked about it, you were somehow shielding your new arrival from the

knowledge that she was different.

In junior high and high school, difference of any kind equals social death. So I as I got older, I did the only thing I could think of: I tried like hell to erase it.

I had my mom, who had once been a beautician, perm my hair. It took two bottles of permanent solution and two hours in plastic curlers for it to stick. I also had her thin my hair with thinning shears so I could be like a girl in my class who had the thinnest, blondest hair I'd ever seen. On the rare occasions when I went to the beauty parlor for a "real" haircut, the ladies would comment on how long and thick and lustrous my hair was. How exotic.

I tried to make my eyes look bigger with makeup, though I never could seem to get the beauty tips in the magazines (which were for white girls) to work for me. Neither could I make whiteness come out any of the tubes of mascara that my aunts gave me for an endless number of Christmases and birthdays.

No matter what I did I wasn't comfortable with who I was trying to be. But I kept trying.

Just when I thought I'd fooled everyone, especially myself, into seeing me as white, there was always something else reminding me of the deception.

At church, my dad would introduce me to new arrivals as his daughter and I instantly felt like a fraud. I could see the look of surprise before they could conceal it with a belated bit of "Minnesota nice."

For a couple of years, my mom sent me and my non-adopted brother to a culture day camp, where for one day of the year we took classes in Korean language and fan dancing, dressed in hanbok and ate Korean food. I tried pretending I was Korean, to see what it felt like, but it was a costume that never fit and one that I shed as soon as we got home. My mom eventually took me to Korea and later taught me how to make bulgogi so I could compete, in full hanbok, at the state fair. But things like these only increased my desire to be recognized as white and I wanted to avoid the questions that I was learning were safer to suppress.

It wasn't like there weren't Korean adoptees in our school. Minnesota has the highest concentration of adoptees in the United States and our school had at least five that I can remember. I avoided them all, because I wanted to be white, and being with them reminded me that I wasn't. Although I did





*Circles II, 2000 (collection privée Washington DC)*

have a short-lived friendship with one of the adoptees in my grade, we never talked about being Korean and especially not about adoption. Eventually we drifted apart, as all kids do at that age. But I also believe it was easier for me to let the friendship go because as long as we were together I was part of an Asian “we.” On my own, I could keep up the pretense that I was not.

Instead, I hid in the safety of the theater, where no one questions the act of trying on different identities, even if it was that of a Jewish woman named Blanche or a German girl named Liesl, and that's where I stayed until college.

All of that was okay for a while, because I was a model minority — easily forgotten as brown because I was quiet, obedient — and I played the role really well. I got away with it too, or thought I did, until the taunts of “chink,” “Jap” and “gook” brought me crashing back to earth.

## Race relations

In college I met my first real Koreans. They wore their black hair straight, had Korean names and Korean parents, and they seemed to know something about Korea. In my mind, they knew what it meant to be Korean.

I met other people of color there, too, and through them, I saw that pride in race and culture was cool, not something to be hidden, and that I, too, could embrace it as they had: without shame. With them, I could stop pretending to be a different person. For the first time, I could feel that other girl in the mirror start to fade.

Yet it wasn't like I discovered myself and it stuck. The awakening I was experiencing couldn't fully protect me from the rollercoaster ride of living between my new self and the one I had lived with for so long.

Back home, family and friends were eager to reassure me that I was one of them. “You're not different, you're Jenny.” It was a sentiment that at first made me feel good, happy to be accepted, but later made me feel alienated, like an outsider in my own home. In the end, it was a slow and insidious kind of invasion that chipped away at my newly discovered sense of self, erasing me until I was no longer a person but an amalgam of everyone else's view of me.

How could people not see the difference that separated us, and therefore,

not see me? How could my family love me, and not some superficial version of myself, if they couldn't see that we were different? If they couldn't see the people staring at us, at me, wherever we went? In many ways, then, I think I decided to make myself as absent as possible so that the questions might stop and I could once again hear the voice in my head telling them they were wrong.

After school I moved to New York and was happy to discover I could blend in whenever I walked out the door. For the first time, I finally felt free. Even the questions about where I “really” came from didn't bother me as much, but I do remember getting really angry when a black man asked it on the subway. It sounded like a line, and a really unimaginative one at that, so I threw up my hands and threw the question back, adding just enough sarcasm so he'd walk away with the message that our mutual brownness made us subject to the same question. Maybe it wasn't enough. In any case, his surprised look of confusion showed me that to him, Asians were always foreign.

To my surprise, that line was a common catcall from men with preconceived notions of the exotic Oriental and what she'd be like. Their sheepish stares and sly attitudes told me the story of their ignorance, but somehow forced another identity upon me. Each incursion erased whatever positive association I was creating for myself as a newly aware person of color, and taught me to see myself as an object capable of little else than the fulfillment of someone else's idea of who they thought I should be.

My response was to try defining “Asianness” for myself and for a time I tried being hyper-Asian. I used chopsticks for everything and trekked across the river to the Korean grocery up on 32nd Street and bought kimchi and strange things in packages with writing that I couldn't read. When I got home, I tried to cook the things with varying degrees of success and when it didn't work I chucked it all and ate the kimchi.

Yet I still avoided the girl from the Korean family who ran the deli down the street. Every time I went into the store for a newspaper or a cake of tofu, she would try to teach me Korean phrases because she thought she'd found a kindred spirit. Her efforts left me feeling uncomfortable and embarrassed because now I was a different kind of fraud, a Korean who couldn't speak a lick of Korean, and I would speed out of the store as fast as I could.



At this point, I was still ignoring my adoptee identity, choosing instead to identify as a person of color and then as Asian-American and Korean-American. But none of those labels really fit. I also tried other Asian identities – Japanese-American, Chinese-American, Filipino-American – encountering each through the lens of literature. I came of race on a steady diet of Tanizaki, Oe, Hagedorn and Yamanaka, and later, Iris Chang, Haruki Murakami, Arundhati Roy and Jhumpa Lahiri. But when I read my first book of adoptee essays, I was floored. Here were stories of people like me who knew what it was to feel like a white person in Asian clothing and knew what it was to be found out. They had dreams of Korea and I realized that I did, too.

### The long road back

Korea wasn't a choice so much as a necessity for me. Deep down, I knew there was something I had to get here that I couldn't get anywhere else. I had long wanted to fill in for myself the blanks that I had let other people fill in for me. I also felt a kind of despair at not knowing my history; it hung like a weight around my shoulders and pressed against my chest until I couldn't breathe. What I wanted was to recapture something of what was left behind when I was sent away and construct a history for myself, if such a thing can be done, to replace the one I lost, or rather, never had.

By the time I got on the plane to come here, I had heard enough adoptees talk about their experiences to know that Korea wasn't a fairytale with a happy ending. I knew some adoptees had experienced the sting of not being recognized as Korean by "Korean" Koreans, but I thought I was prepared for the experience because I had developed another identity as a person of color. I thought it would give me a cushion. It didn't.

In the early days, I bristled at the cabbies who thought I was Japanese or Chinese because of my stunted Korean and I was shocked at how angry and offended some ajumma seemed when I couldn't understand their rapid-fire speech. One Korean ajumma I met while traveling on one of my first trips into the countryside gave me a look like I'd done something really horrible to her when I couldn't follow her terse instructions.

In the States I had felt my physical appearance was deceiving because

people thought I was Korean when I felt white inside. Once I started to see myself as a person of color, maybe even a Korean, I thought people would be able to see it, too. Arriving here, I realized that they couldn't. The same set of contradictions that the promise of my physical appearance seemed to present in the States had followed me here. So I slipped back into old habits – only this time, instead of playing white, I was playing Korean.

When I entered language class I could no longer pretend.

The Korean language was difficult, but not only because it shares nothing with English. The Korean teachers I encountered seemed to expect, whether subconsciously or not, that I either be Korean or that I be *kyopo*, people who grew up with one or two Korean parents. Each new word I learned revealed that I wasn't and it was like peeling skin from an onion, each layer sharper, stronger, more bitter than the next. Sometimes the bitterness became like a weapon turned inward to places I didn't know had been wounded.

I've been told that I arrived to the United States with words – my mom once told me that one of them was "omma." In class, it was hard not to think about the loss of that word and the person it represented. When we did exercises where we talked about our families and our birthdays, saying my American birthday, talking about my Caucasian family – in Korean – felt wrong.

### The third space

After my arrival, I met two groups of people who changed my experience of Korea completely.

The first was a group of dancers who became my surrogate Korean family. They allowed me to immerse myself in Korean culture and I learned much of what I know about Koreanness from them.

I spent hours in rehearsal, basking in the sounds of a language that was once again, for a short time, my own. With them, I only wanted to speak Korean because it allowed me to reconnect with a part of myself that I previously hadn't been able to access and I felt I was reclaiming something from my past.

They taught me what to eat and they taught me what breathing in Korean



*Tirez la Languette-Paulette (2002)*





**About Friendship (1994-5)**

is like (내시고, 마시고). They also taught me how Korean I wasn't by correcting and sometimes mocking my evolving baby talk. Then they taught me that none of it mattered: we were all family.

The second group of people I met was the community of adoptees who showed me another space: one where I'm neither Korean nor American, nor Korean-American. It was, to borrow a phrase from one adoptee, a "third space."

Before I arrived, I had reconnected with an adoptee from the town where I grew up who was the sister of my adoptee friend from high school. She let me stay in her tiny ground level apartment until I had a place to live, and during that time, she took me to palaces, showed me which foods to order and sympathized with my Korea confusions. She was generous with her friends and they soon became mine, too. Like us, they were adoptees, and with them, I could talk about adoption, race and identity – how it had affected us growing up and how it compared to what we were experiencing here. We also talked about how our identities had always been defined for us by other people: by adoptive parents, by agency workers, politicians and "experts." We sought to be recognized as experts of our own experiences, but we also wanted to move beyond the personal aspects of adoption to the larger system in which it continued to affect so many women and children. We researched the social context in which it arose and the social and political forces that kept it in place. Eventually, we formalized our group and gave ourselves a name, Adoptee Solidarity Korea, and a mission – to advocate for the rights of adoptees and to frame adoption as a social, political and human rights issue. Since then, ASK has worked to raise awareness about the complexities of the adoption system and adoptees' place in it. Today, we hold public forums on those subjects and we have helped shaped public policy through our involvement in the recent overhaul of Korea's adoption law that passed last year. We've also started a series of mental health forums that we hope will help empower adoptees as they work through their adoption experiences.

Through the relationships I've formed within this community of adoptees, what has become clear to me is that my identity as a Korean is inextricably linked to my identity as an adoptee.

## No easy ending

I could pretend that this story has an easy ending, but I won't. I've done enough pretending to know that it doesn't get me very far.

I've always wanted to be recognized as Korean on some level, because my physical appearance seems to indicate that's what I should be, and in the back of my mind, I thought I could wash the white away. Being here has sometimes made me feel that I could. But this part of my identity is like an open wound.

I can no longer pretend to be just Asian, just Korean-American or just kyopo. My experience has taught me that as an adoptee, I lack the familial history and biological ties that seem to ground the people from these other groups.

In some ways, exploring the Korean part of my identity in Korea has given me a frame through which to finally see myself. However, I now know that I will never lay claim to all of the pieces of myself that I lost when I was adopted, so I will have to go about creating something new.

I still struggle with language, and language learning, and think about what it would be to be completely fluent. I still see women on the train and wonder if we're related because searching for my birth family is a task of which I've only scratched the surface and come up wanting. I believe that I have a birth family out there, somewhere, that I am not a true orphan without parents, but I also know I could be wrong. Part of me still wants to know. There's a whole set of questions about identity that people with a biological family don't seem to have to ask. They already know they got their smile from their mother, the way they hold their pen from their father. Adoptees I know who have reunited with their birth families talk about the character traits, the physical gestures or the verbal tics, they have in common with members of their birth families. What have I inherited?

Amidst this search for an identity, a place to call home, a place where I feel comfortable in my own skin, are the remnants of a life not lived, of another family I may never know. I also carry with me multiple identities as a cultural Minnesotan, an ethnic Korean and an adoptee, and I know I will move among them throughout my life.







# My Korean identity: Romin Lee Johnson

Interview by Matthew Lamers / Photo by James Little

Occupation: Professor

Age: 31

Time in Korea: Two years

Every year thousands of Ethnic Koreans from around the world come to Korea to explore their roots. Their experiences with Korean culture and heritage vary — some speak Korean, some don't — but most report that a big reason they are here is to try to fill in some missing information. Following is an interview with Romin Lee Johnson, who came to Korea to explore his shared Korean heritage with his wife and children. — Ed.

## ➤ Groove Korea: Did you grow up with Korean people, culture, language? How did they play a role in your development as a person or your desire to explore your Korean identity?

Romin Lee Johnson: Yes, I grew up (in a Korean household). My mother was Korean and obviously I was exposed to Korean from a very young age. My grandmother would often take care of me and sing Korean songs to me, so in some ways Korean was actually almost a first language until I entered primary school, because I would sing Korean songs with my mom and grandmother.

Once I hit primary school my Korean was all but lost on some level.

Being exposed to the Korean language in the house gave me an understanding of the heritage.

I also have vague recollections of going to school with Korean food and a packed lunch and getting funny looks from friends, so I was always a little bit — I was always aware of being different, but my father is American so it was never something that was clear-cut.

But I do recall when I was young some kids obviously didn't know if I was part Korean or American or what; so I guess a lot of the time it was assumed that I was Chinese or something like that. It was something I was very aware of from a young age.

## How and when did you come to an understanding of your Korean identity? How has that developed over the years?

I think it was definitely a long process. Like I said, I knew I was different when I was going to school; eating Korean food at home; listening to my mother in Korean. My siblings and I would often hear my mother speaking in Korean around the house, but we would always respond in English. I think to this day that has impacted me. My ability to understand Korean is definitely a lot more advanced than my ability to speak or write, because it was something that I was exposed to more verbally around the house.

As I got older, in my teenage years, it became less clear. When I started to come to terms with my own identity, sometimes I would identify more with my Korean side and sometimes I would identify more with my father's side, my Caucasian side. But I don't think I was ever ashamed that I was part Korean. As I got older, it was something that I was able to wear more and more as a badge of honor.

I visited Korea with my uncle when I was 8 or 9 years old and I'd been back to Korea for a visit at least every couple years since then and we've lived in Korea now for two years. It's definitely a part of me that I am proud of; I am proud of a culture.

## Can you talk about growing up as a Korean-American in a predominantly Caucasian society?

I guess I touched upon this a little bit. Nowadays, with K-pop and things like "Gangnam Style," Korea placing so well in the Olympics, it being the 13th- or 14th-largest economy, I think people are more aware of Korea as a force to be reckoned with than when I was young.

You know, I had kind of smaller eyes, I've got black hair and brown eyes, so a lot of peers in elementary and middle school would just assume that I was Chinese. It became something that I guess I got used to.

## When you lived in America as a minority, did you feel a separation from the majority? How did you deal with it?

I think I felt more of a separation when I was first confronted with my Asian appearance when I was young, but it became something I got used to as time went on. By the time I hit my teenage years, I remember more or less fully embracing it.

I do remember being in third or fourth grade and being at the back of a bus on the way to school and some bully was making fun of me because I looked Asian. But what can you do about that sort of thing? Of course it got under my skin. But as you get older, that kind of thing becomes less and less an issue and less and less pronounced.

## Did growing up as a visible minority drive a desire for personal exploration? Did you ever feel a need to become part of the majority? How did that affect how you behaved and the choices you made?

I don't think growing up as a visible minority had as much of an effect on my need for personal exploration as having a father who was always supportive of being able to turn inwards and look at myself.

I don't think looking Asian really made me want to look inside as much as it made me want to learn more about my mother's culture and the history of her country.

My wife and I are both half-Korean and we have been living here in Korea for almost two years now. It was something that we also value — coming from two different worlds — and it's something that we wanted to explore, to expose our two boys to at a young age, so they could also understand and appreciate it.

## How would you compare that to your experience living in Korea?

It's interesting being half-Korean — or half-Asian for that matter — because in growing up in America, at a young age people assumed I was Chinese, but as I got more into my teenage years, people would often ask if I was part Italian, Middle Eastern; I've been called many different things. So being in America I look like "the other," but being in Korea, I also look like "the other."

Koreans know that I am not full-Korean and when I'm walking around with my half-Korean wife and our half-Korean children, we definitely get more than our fair share of attention. That's something that is a double-edged sword, because it's endearing, but it's also annoying. It's kind of a pseudo-celebrity status when we go out and strangers come up and take pictures of our children (laughs), because that's just the reality. I think Korean society is curious because several half-Koreans have come into prominence in the media or as celebrities. So there is a curiosity there that is more pronounced than being half-Korean and living in America.

## To what degree was exploring Korean heritage part of why you moved to Korea?

It was a huge part actually. Exploring our Korean heritage, our shared heritage, with my wife and our children was a huge part of our decision to come to Korea. It was something that my wife and I had talked about since before we were married. It was something we always felt the desire to do, to spend some time abroad, but specifically in Korea.

It was definitely a difficult transition for the first few months, but since we've settled in and our boys have settled in, I feel like Korea has taken good care of us. We definitely feel just as at home here as we did in the States.

## What did you expect to find and how was it different from what you actually experienced here?

Like I said before, I had made my fair share of trips to Korea over the years,



so I had a fairly good sense of what to expect here, so I can't say there were any big surprises.

Culturally, I think my wife has had a more difficult time adapting to the culture on a more personal level, because she spends a lot of time with other mothers, all of whom are Korean and few of whom are married to Westerners. But she, I feel, has had more difficulties coming to terms with the realities of cultural differences and social expectations.

#### **How long have you been here and what's kept you here over the years?**

My in-laws live down the street from us and that is something that has been really valuable — having our boys have their grandparents down the street, who can watch them several times a week. That's been a huge help.

The difficult thing is not having a backyard that the boys can run around in. If there's anything tugging us back Stateside, besides our friends and family, it's not having our own space, our own backyard, our own land, that our boys can go running around in.

I think now that they're getting older — they're 4 and 2 — that's something that is really important. I spent a lot of my childhood years living in rural Pennsylvania and Maine and having space to run around in and explore. Our boys are really adventurous; there is only so much energy that they can expend in a 34-pyeong (112 sq m) apartment.

#### **Would you label yourself as a Korean, Korean-American, American, or do you detest labels?**

That's funny, because filling out any paperwork (in the States) that required you to put down your race or ethnicity, I would check "the other" category, then I would probably write in Korean-American or Asian American.

I think that I definitely wouldn't label myself as a "Korean" and when I say "Korean-American" that's close, but doesn't really quite get there. When I think of a "Korean-American" I think of a full-blooded Korean who has grown up in America. And I don't see myself as that, obviously.

I am American. I was born in New York City. But I feel like there are more and more bi-racial families now than there ever were. You see more and more of them. I think it's a welcome sight.

#### **How important is it for overseas Koreans to understand their Korean heritage to understand themselves? In other words, why does it matter?**

I don't think this is something that I could quantify. Obviously it was important enough for my wife and I — with our Korean heritage — to feel the desire to come spend at least several years immersed in both our mothers' heritage.

We both absolutely love Korean food and there are aspects of Korean culture that we really love, and there are aspects of Korean culture that are really difficult for us to negotiate.

I think it's definitely subjective.

I actually do a lot of work as a photographer and this past year I have been photographing a lot of international adoptions. So these are families that are coming from America to adopt a Korean child.

I think of most of the parents I meet and have hired me to document this part of their journey, they all understand the need to document this part of their story and this part of their heritage; most tell me that they want to come back to Korea and (want) their Korean-born children to be exposed to that part of their heritage, because it is important. It's something that's in their blood.

Certainly there are people who have Korean heritage who have been adopted or are born overseas that don't feel the need to come back and explore this part of their heritage or identity, but I think it's important to be open to that part of one's self. 🌐







# My Korean identity:

Michael Hurt

Occupation: Ph.D. candidate

Age: 40

Time in Korea: 14 years

**Interview by** Matthew Lamers

Every year thousands of Ethnic Koreans from around the world come to Korea to explore their roots. Their experiences with Korean culture and heritage vary — some speak Korean, some don't — but most report that a big reason they are here is to try to fill in some missing information. Following is an interview with Michael Hurt. — Ed.

## ➤ **Groove Korea: What role did the understanding of your Korean heritage play in your upbringing?**

Michael Hurt: None really. Only in terms of her being a mom, but otherwise, it wasn't like I had some insight into the culture necessarily. I had a Korean mom, I still do, but the thing is, much of her influence is just from her personality.

She had a little bit of the Park Chung Hee era study-study-study mentality, so if there's any influence, it's that I hate math because my mom bought these extra-curricular math books and she was going to teach us math when we were in early elementary school. She was trying to get me ahead of the other kids, but I ended up hating math. That became a point of friction — the "home study," she called it. In a way that is very Korean, but something that backfired.

There are things that come from Korean culture I guess, but it's hard to identify which ones are Korea versus which ones are just my mom, especially since some took and some didn't take, too. Language didn't take, math didn't take, but my Korean relatives tell me I got my love of books from my mom, even though she didn't read much.

## **Would you label yourself as a Korean, Korean-American, American, or do you detest labels?**

American, or black, if I was pushed. When I was in high school, if I was going through any identity crisis, it was about being part black, because if you have one drop of black blood it means you're black, according to custom and law in the United States. And you know, if you weren't "black enough" in the '80s then you got shit for it.

There's this great book called "Losing the Race" by a black linguist at (University of California) Berkeley and he got in a lot of crap for it. He was talking about how black identity politics was hurting black people. His whole thing was right: Studying was antithetical to being a "real" black person. So speaking "proper" English was speaking "white." You're always thinking about that in high school and trying to figure out who you are. So when I was lifeguarding at the pool — it was mostly black kids, and a lot of them didn't have anywhere to go — they asked me "Why do you talk so white?" and I said, "I don't talk white, I talk properly."

(In high school) I tended to gravitate more towards defining myself in the black direction. Korean didn't fit into that at all.

## **How important is it for overseas Koreans to understand their Korean heritage to understand themselves?**

See, that's a very American question. To understand their Korean heritage — this is a very American, loaded idea; there is this idea of a true heritage or true culture that somehow is linked to your genes.

A lot of Korean-Americans get mad at a taxi driver because he (the taxi driver) doesn't understand that they were raised in American and don't speak Korean. "Why don't you speak Korean?" the taxi driver will ask — like somehow Koreans in Korea are just supposed to "get it."

But Americans don't "get it" in a very similar way. The whole idea of linking culture to your blood — (is the same logic as) you have to come to Korea to find out who you are or to properly understand yourself — your true self. To me, that's not necessary.



**"When I was in high school, if I was going through any identity crisis, it was about being part black, because if you have one drop of black blood it means you're black, according to custom and law in the United States. And you know, if you weren't 'black enough' in the '80s then you got shit for it."**

**Can you talk about growing up as a Korean-American in a predominantly Caucasian society?**

I would say I grew up in a very black-white society in Dayton, Ohio. I didn't know this at the time, but I grew up in the middle of desegregation, which is why I went to six elementary schools in my first six years of school. To me it seemed you switched schools every year. It seemed natural. I didn't know it was unnatural. It was because they were trying to mix Dayton public schools up.

I guess the only time when my Asian part came up (at that age) is when So-young Park, a Korean-American girl, came into my sphere in the fourth grade. Her friends became friends with my mom, obviously because all Korean people have to know each other. So me and So-young started hanging out. I still remember one time, the first Asian moment I ever had, was when some kids were asking why So-young was sitting cross-legged, "Why does she sit so weird," they asked. I rebutted, "That's her culture, leave her alone." And we joined the same orchestra and became friends.

**Did growing up as a visible minority drive a desire for personal exploration?**

Sure. I guess that definitely was the case. But it was more "am I black or am I something else?" I started getting irritated with the black community not letting anything else in there. You couldn't be black and (Asian) — you could just be black.

When I went to Brown, they had the (Third World Transition Program) just for minority students. TWTP had workshops about identity and everything — this is in the early '90s. So when I went into that program, I (felt) awakened as a minority, but then I was like, "wait a minute, why are all the black students going over there for their workshops, the Asian-Americans going over here, native-Americans over there?" I asked, "Why do I have to go to one group?" So me and another person started the Brown Organization of Multiracial and Biracial Students — or BOMBS.

So really in college, being not easily compatible with any particular group is what drove me to make my own place. So I made that place on campus, but also in my own head.

**Did you ever feel a need to become part of the majority? How did that affect how you behaved and the choices you made?**

Yes, if you define the majority as black majority. Then I didn't question the idea that I had to fit in somewhere. So in high school I was busy trying very hard to be "black enough." And in college I think I was busy trying to make another space.

**Why didn't you feel you had be "Asian enough" or "Korean enough"?**

See this is so linked to American senses of identity, right? There was no Asian-American identity (at the time). Asian-Americans at the time were busy just saying "I'm American, too; I speak English!" That's what being Asian was at the time. "I'm not a foreigner." That's as far as Asian-American identity got.

**To what degree was exploring Korean heritage part of why you moved to Korea?**

I was just curious about Korea. Being multi-racial and whatever, and actually making more of a space for the Asian part ... I was trying to figure out what "Korea" was and the program I got sent over on was very good. The Fulbright ETA Program was good because it gave you cultural and linguistic orientation. It was hardcore. It was all about diving into Korean culture. They send me into a homestay, which was awesome. I'm very glad I never came to Korea to work at a hagwon or anything like that, because I think I would have just left Korea hating it. I was just curious about the notion of Korea itself — in relation to me identity-wise.

But after a year I realized I was asking the wrong question. I learned that I am not like these people. The thing I learned was, I am American as fuck.

I kind of realized that I didn't learn anything (particularly deep about) Korean culture, it was just a place that was very, very different from anything that I knew. (Being in Korea) did explain some aspects of my mom's thinking in terms of her having come from the hardcore Korea, in terms of the work ethic and my mom being very hardcore and just seeing habits, ways of doing things here. Knowing that my mom grew up here, I had some "awe" moments.

I learned about my mom, and by extension, myself through my mom, what made my mom tick.

**Was what you expected to find in Korea and how you thought you'd feel different from what you actually experienced here?**


Yes. I came here expecting this place to be so inscrutable and difficult to understand that I didn't think I'd be able to learn much of the language.

But at the end of my first year, when I was speaking every day Korean, my touchstone was the Fulbright office. At the beginning they sent us out — mostly to the countryside — and we really didn't know what was going on. By the time we came back at the end of the year, I still remember talking with the secretary in Korean; I was surprised. I had no inkling that I could come this far — to integrate into Korean society. I had a Korean girlfriend at the time. I didn't see any of that happening when I first came here. I didn't think it was even possible. I guess the level of understanding that I had come to was not something I thought was even possible when I first came here.

**Ultimately, did being in Korea fill in any blanks?**

What I realized was that I had been asking the relevant questions to fill in that space that I defined for Korea, and that I had sort of been barking up the wrong tree.

I think that a lot of Korean-heritage people sort of exoticize and fetishize their notion of what that "culture" is in the same way that we often accuse white folks of doing, which is building that thing up to something large and exotic, which it really isn't once you come and experience this place for yourself.

I realized that there was no "ancient Chinese secret" to be discovered, and I make that joke because I think some people really think in terms of there being some magical connection to an unchangeable essence about "who they are." I realize that I learned a lot about the place called Korea and the concept that I defined in my head, but I haven't really answered any essential burning questions about myself, specifically from the experience. 





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# 'Gangnam Style?' No such thing

And why Psy's summer hit might even be good

Story and Photos by R.M. Adamson

## "Gangnam Style"

I'm a guy  
A guy who is as warm as you during the day  
A guy who one-shots his coffee before it even cools down  
A guy whose heart bursts when night comes  
That kind of guy



여자의 잃어버린 시간  
피부 생명력으로 되찾

펩타이드의 피부과학  
이자녹스 HD-ACTIVE



➤ The song is not really about coffee, but you probably guessed that already.

Seeing as how coffee shops serve as backdrops for romantic and emotional scenes in a lot of "hallyu," or Korean Wave, television series, it might be only a small surprise that the beverage plays a role in the recent K-pop hit song and video "Gangnam Style" by the performing artist who goes the handle Psy. (Translation on the previous page courtesy of the blog Princess of Tea.)

The song has gone viral, being heard around the world, and generating interest even in the United States. The first time you heard it, you might have thought, "Well, okay, here's one more K-pop song I don't care about but nevertheless will be forced to listen to whenever I go out in public." And you'd have been right, of course, but probably none of us expected the popularity to reach out as far as it has in such a short time — and I believe Park Jae-sang (a.k.a. Psy) did not expect it either, even though this is just the sort of thing music groups and entertainment industry leaders have been trying hard to engineer for a while now.

Why the mass hysteria? I honestly don't know, but then again, I don't know why most popular songs become popular, and I think there's no science to it. No one really knows the reasons some things capture the popular imagination and others do not, which is why such massive popularity often comes about so unexpectedly.

There's a bouncy Euro-pop beat and strong male vocals, okay, and a hook that pops out at the listener unexpectedly, and turns out to be hard to resist. The melody fits right in with what a lot of other local artists are doing, derivations of American hip hop and gangsta rap, prettied up a bit, but combined with a vocal delivery that at times (to me, at least) harkens back to an older style of Korean popular music called *teuteu*, which is still sometimes heard playing in taxi cabs and cabarets frequented by Koreans of mature years. It's an unexpected combination of sources, some of which are not immediately recognizable.

And yet the song has spawned tribute-imitations from Singapore, Taiwan, the United States and elsewhere, and to explain that I think we'll have to look at the video — and let's note that a lot of this refers to aspects of Korean life that might be less than familiar to those who are unfamiliar with this place.

You've got a guy, plainly over 30, wearing really goofy-looking suits, not in all that good shape, who is clowning around in a scattered selection of typical Korean backgrounds, supposed scenes of posh and glamour, from which the rug gets pulled out almost immediately: first, he's kicking back and catching some rays, but when the camera pulls back, we see that his beach chair is planted in a children's playground, where a kindergarten kid starts busting some moves and shows him how hip hop freestyle ought to be done; next, he's in a public bath, a *mokyotang*, not a tony high-end spa, where he's nodding off with his head on a tattooed gangster's shoulder; he's belting out his lyrics on a microphone while taking charge of the aisle of a *norae-bang* tour bus full of middle-aged women on vacation; later, we'll see him striding aggressively toward the camera through a stable full of horses and we eventually do see him sitting atop a horse — but it's a wooden one, on a merry-go-round, which is really the only place you are likely to find a horse in Gangnam. Along the way other K-pop stars appear in cameos, which seems to be quite common over here with music videos, and one of them becomes his love interest — they meet on a subway train, not a posh cafe or night club — and from there the video becomes an over-the-top Bollywood-style dance production.

And there is that dance, yes, a new dance, a kinetic meme, not hard to learn, and therefore easily replicated, the "horse dance." Psy teaches it throughout the video, and apparently the lessons have been internalized in unexpected places: a YouTube video shows a couple of American football players incorporating some of the moves into a victory dance after making a touchdown. Psy almost never rests, by the way, and the only time his feet aren't moving (though his hands are still waving) is during a brief shot where he's expounding to the camera from below, said camera then panning back again to show he's sitting on a toilet with his pants down.

It's slapstick, sight gags, and odd situations — in other words, pretty much what passes for comedy in Korea at this time. It's funny enough, sure, but

to someone not familiar with the tropes of Korean life, it will look simply outlandish, weird, outrageously bizarre and mostly inexplicable.

And that might partly explain the appeal we are seeing from outside of Korea.

### What Gangnam is

It's a place, and the name just means "south of the river" in Korean. I lived there for a while when I first came to this country, and it didn't take more than a week or so to understand that whatever that place is, it sure ain't Korea. There are some who believe it's the best part of the ROK, but there are others who think it represents everything that's wrong with this country.

It is just one of several administrative districts, often lumped together in conversation with its immediate neighbors, Banpo, Seocho and Songpa. It's an area of Seoul that many consider to be the most important part of the most important city in South Korea.

It's where the big money goes, where the famous people are, and if you are Korean, and if you have any ambition at all, it's probably where you want to be, though that has been changing somewhat since I first wrote those words elsewhere a couple of years ago. All the important businesses and retail outlets, both foreign and domestic, have some kind of presence there. They must, and they do.

If you want to buy a Ferrari, you'll probably go there to do it, and same for a BMW or a Jaguar. Ditto for cosmetic surgery clinics, the latest European fashion designs, and tanning salons — and that last one is a little odd, considering that the Asian ideal of beauty is pale, alabaster skin. (See: Kim Yuna.) A friend of mine once lived in this part of city, and when I'd come out to visit, his mock-serious query was, "Now, Bob, did you wipe your feet before you came to Gangnam?" In truth, I've often thought I should at least be wearing a tie whenever I got off the train there even during those summer months when no one else was doing so.

Espresso coffee shops there sometimes have valet parking — yes, that's what I said. But across the street from that, people are unloading rice in big sacks, and cleaning vegetables out on the sidewalk, just like you'd see in any small town or village, or really anywhere in the rest of Seoul. Gangnam is the place where the reality of Korea's "economic miracle" is made plain — because, you see, most Koreans don't live like that, though most would like to.

Please be advised: Gangnam is not really Korea. When I lived there, still new to this country, I found it disappointing in its lack of opportunities for culture shock. In fact, it was so remarkably similar to the kinds of places in America that I didn't enjoy going to that I'd usually get myself across the river in my off-hours, just to see what Asia really looks like. In short, Gangnam is not my style.

In the years that came after, while residing in other areas of the city, I was intrigued to learn what it was like to live in a foreign country, which Gangnam is not. It's a relatively small area in one of the world's largest mega-cities, yet the real value contained in that small area exceeds the entire combined value of property in this country's second-largest city, Busan. Enclaves of the super-rich — Beverly Hills in California, St. Moritz in Switzerland, Park Avenue in Manhattan, Monaco, Martha's Vineyard, wherever they happen to be located across the globe — have much more in common with each other than they do with rest of whatever country they are located in. I pop over from time to time when a bit of work calls me, or one of my friends sells me on trying out an adventurous new restaurant, but every time I go, I'm left with the thought: This is not Korea. It's not even quite real. It is a great, big, bright shining jewel, part of a dream that everyone wants to have. And one that very few will ever get to do more than taste, or gaze upon from afar.

### Why Gangnam is bad

At the New York Steak House in Sinsa-dong, around the corner from the trendy fashion street of Garosu-gil, the waiter who brought my lunch spoke to me with such perfect English that I was tempted to demand an explanation about just what the hell he was doing carrying food to people to earn his right to breathe in this country when so many companies are hiring and promoting people based on their English language skills. Perhaps he just doesn't like spending all his days cooped up in an office.





There is no such thing as “Gangnam style.” It’s not a real place. It is a place you can visit, and true, you can even sleep and collect mail there. Yes, people are born and die there. It is a place constructed of illusion, aspiration, financial speculation — in which the value of a thing is determined not by intrinsic worth but rather by what people think it is worth or might become worth, in other words, human desire and greed.



The bowl of "Steak and Rice" that arrived, ordered from a menu entirely in my native tongue, might as well have been called Sirloin Bibimbab, except there was no sign of gochujang, or red pepper paste, and the egg on top was poached, not fried. The only thing on the table that came close to kimchi was cabbage slices, lightly pickled but unfermented.

No kimchi? What country is this? It isn't Korea, it's Gangnam.

I'd had a job interview that morning a short walk from there. The position would be at a public school not far from my own neighborhood, but both I and the school's teaching staff had made the trek across the river to meet in the office of a hiring company on the 7th floor of a tall building. That's how we all know we are serious about whatever it is we are up to: We arrange to meet each other the first time through a third party — in Gangnam, of course.

During the interview they offered me water. It came in a paper cup. Yeah, a paper cup. In Gangnam. This did not bode well. A paper cup, in Gangnam? I made it into a joke to tell my friends.

I wasn't surprised when I didn't get called back, and apparently I was not going to get to see the actual place of employment until I had been given an offer. I guess it didn't occur to anyone that I was also interviewing them to see if I'd want to work there, but that's part of the prevailing sense that one should feel some kind of awe and importance from simply being in that part of town.

That was two years ago. A year later, I took a job as a part-time substitute teacher at a school not far from Gangnam Station, a kindergarten and elementary after-school institute, and after a few weeks they offered me a full-time contract at a salary slightly more than I would have asked for if they had told me to name my own price. Good money, in other words, and there was no reason to turn it down because by then I already knew the school and the other staff. I left after three months for several reasons, but I had noticed something in the meantime, that children of great wealth, even of kindergarten and elementary school age, can very early on incorporate the idea that the bulk of the world around them exists as servants dedicated to their happiness. (I want to make it clear that I've never been treated unfairly in any way by any of the Gangnam concerns I've worked for.)

You might be guessing at where I'm going, that Gangnam is a bad place because it is full of rich people, and that money corrupts and vast amounts of it are bound to do so even more — I'll admit, it's some of that, but not only that. Great wealth does not automatically lead to moral decay or arrogance. More often it leads to a sense of separation from the rest of society, and a sense that one is entitled to what has been given, usually by accident in the case of those who were born into it, which is the case today for many Gangnam residents, especially the young, those who come into life without having to struggle in any way.

Gangnam was not my first exposure to the super-rich, or those with pretensions that bend people toward it, and my response in such circumstances has often been an attitude of amusement. I've never been unaware of the fact that however much I might have worked for what I have in life, I was also given much and helped much by others, and I've also known that so many people exist who haven't been given so much or been helped by others—and so when I've come in contact with people who were given vastly more and feel it to be a result of perhaps a genetic superiority ... well, there is something ridiculous, something laughable somewhere in that, certainly.

And so I laugh. It even seems possible that Mr. Park, Psy, has come up with a similar strategy.

#### Is Psy a subversive satirist?

There has been some interesting speculation that the song and the video present satirical depictions of modern Korean aspirations, and I owe some debt to an article in the Atlantic ("Gangnam Style, Dissected: The Subversive Message Behind South Korea's Music Video Sensation," Aug. 23, 2012) for piquing my interest enough to give the song and video a second look. The idea presented here is that Psy is tweaking Gangnam's collective nose at the same time he makes fun of himself. He (or the character he's created) wants to be this guy, the guy he describes as "a man who knows a thing or two," and thinks that simply asserting that he deserves the good life is enough to

make it happen for him. He has swagger and that ought to be enough to get him what he wants, and to get him the girl he wants ... and yet there he is, singing on a tour bus, riding a carousel, waving his finger at the ceiling with his pants around his ankles in the crapper.

He's got attitude, all right, but his values and his goals are hollow, shallow and lacking in substance — just like the crass materialism and designer-label carapace of Gangnam itself. His character shouts constantly, "I AM Gangnam Style!" and yet it's nothing more than a comical pose, one that he himself acknowledges no irony in. Thus, he is a buffoon, weird clothes and idiotic horse dance and all, and by extension, the actual people living in Gangnam and desperately seeking the Gangnam lifestyle, are also unknowing clowns.

Others have said that he embraces his Korean-ness with all those typical location shots in the video, and that this sets himself apart of other K-pop artists who film their music videos in studios and almost sanitize the images of anything that smells remotely like kimchi. Writing in the Wall Street Journal ("Gangnam Style's U.S. Popularity Has Koreans Puzzled, Gratified" Aug. 28, 2012), Jeff Yang makes comparisons to Korean performance styles from previous centuries, specifically those types of entertainers called "gwang-dae":

*"Gwang-dae are more clown or jester-like," says Kang. "They don't have to be sexy idols to be popular. Their songs are either very humorous, or can sound serious, but with silly lyrics."*

*The original gwang-dae were given a certain amount of license to critique the aristocracy, offering up satirical commentary on society through their dance, music and repartee.*

This idea supposes a place for Psy in the cultural history of the Han people by showing a precedent in which the jester, standing outside and powerless himself, might speak truth to power by means of sarcastic jokes and parody. I like the idea, but describing that such a tradition existed in the past does not mean that it continues in anything like that form today, when so many other traditions have disappeared or become radically altered through disuse, calamity or the necessities of the modern world. In much the same way, even if we insist that a tradition from feudal times such as this were still active in modern Korea — and perhaps I'm merely unaware of other examples — I think it would also be necessary for Mr. Park to consciously and publicly assume that role of social commentator, and to my knowledge he has not done so.

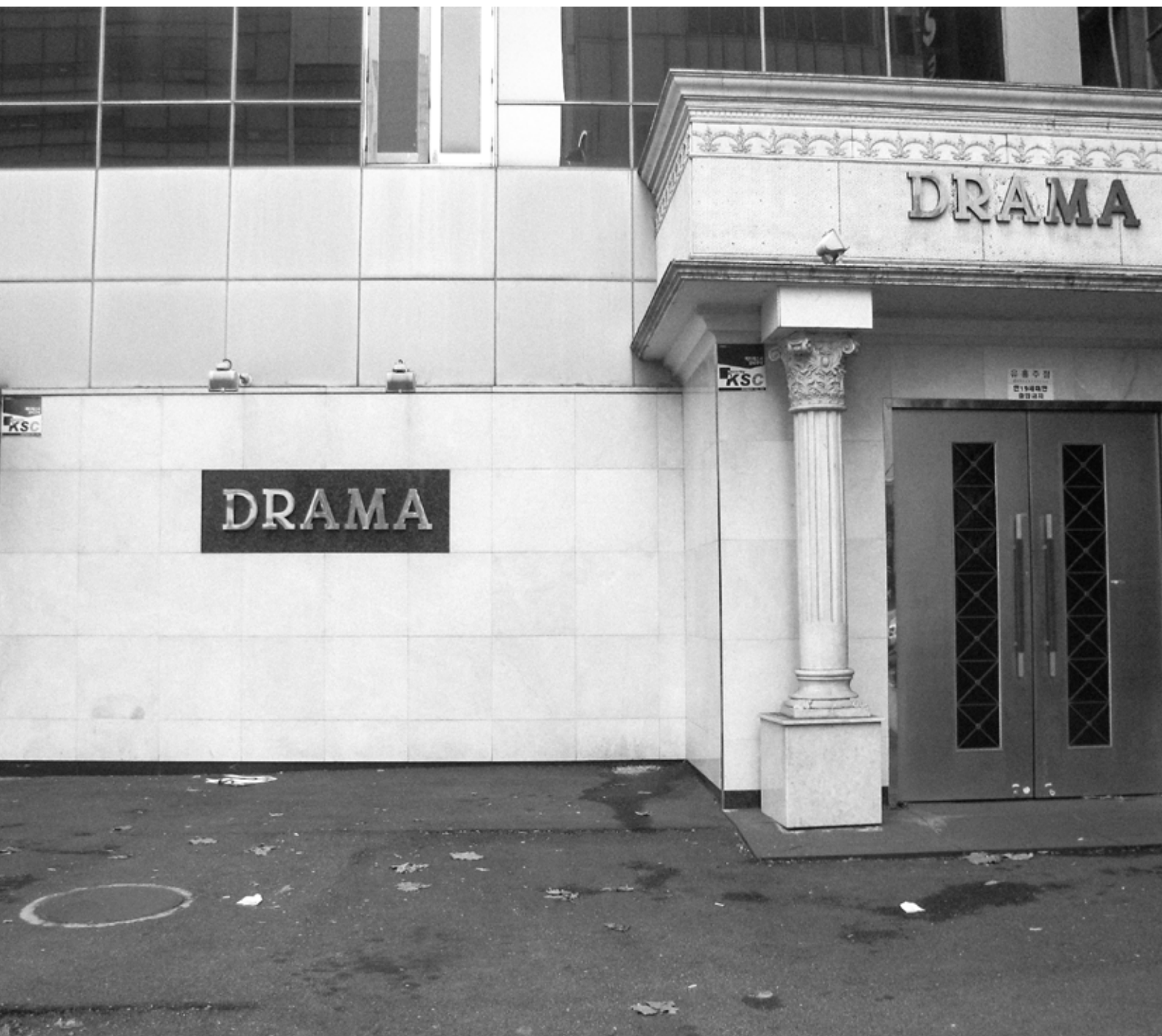
Rather, to the contrary, every interview or fan piece I've read in this regard suggests something else, that he really just wanted to help people have a little fun, and I'm inclined to believe him. In this song, at least, he's not speaking even one syllable of unwanted truth to actual places of power in this country — the Blue House, the corporate-sponsored media based in Yeouido, the head offices of Samsung and Hyundai — but rather he's painting a caricature of the societal effects of those power structures, and the way people react to them.

Psy has at times been called a yeupkigasu, or roughly, weird singer, but that's a far cry from suggesting he's engaged in the kind of social criticism that challenges the status quo — for that, you'd have to look at the podcast comedic troupe, NaneunGgomsuda, who have so irked those in the halls of power that one of their members has been serving a year's prison term under the harsh defamation laws here.

Psy studied music while living in America for several years, and despite the language ability that would allow him, it might be worth noting that he's neglected to insert any English words at all into his song, except in the bridge: "Hey, sexy lady." This is in contrast to most other K-pop artists that do so much more and end up with cringingly wrong grammar or usage errors. (Lee Hyori is a repeat offender, it seems.) He did not begin his music career as part of a consciously-constructed corporate artifact, as is undoubtedly true for nearly every other K-pop group, and he writes his own songs and choreographs his videos — the "invisible horse dance" belongs to him, and him alone — but he has been signed to YG Entertainment for several years now so he is decidedly a part of K-pop, not standing on the outside laughing.

All this supports the idea that his intended audience was Korean people rather than the outside world. He has said that he wanted to give people





It's slapstick, sight gags, and odd situations — in other words, pretty much what passes for comedy in Korea at this time. It's funny enough, sure, but to someone not familiar with the tropes of Korean life, it will look simply outlandish, weird, outrageously bizarre and mostly inexplicable. And that might partly explain the appeal we are seeing from outside of Korea.



some giggles because the weather was so hot this summer and the economy isn't doing so well — on the other hand, it seems to be getting warmer all over the world, and the economy is hurting pretty much everywhere. Koreans aren't the only ones who need a good laugh.

Is this song in fact social commentary, sarcasm in a directed attack at prevailing social attitudes? I'm not convinced, though I'd like to be.

Gandhi was once asked for his opinion of Western civilization, and he famously replied, "I think it would be a good idea." I think that applies here as well. It would be a nice thing to see someone at least attempt to demolish the respectability and expose the paltry nature of what so many aspire to in this country — the exclusive night clubs full of women (and sometimes men) enhanced by cosmetic surgery, the foreign cars and the highrise hotels and apartment complexes, the love of things only for the fat nature of the price tag and little more. It would be nice — and it might be even be necessary — for someone to point out that these things are not going to work out for everyone, and probably not even for the people who live there.

### No such thing

There is no such thing as "Gangnam style." It's not a real place.

It is a place you can visit, and true, you can even sleep and collect mail there. Yes, people are born and die there. It is a place constructed of illusion, aspiration, financial speculation — in which the value of a thing is determined not by intrinsic worth but rather by what people think it is worth or might become worth, in other words, human desire and greed.

In fact, it was a place that didn't exist until a couple of generations ago, and it was created deliberately. The people who built Gangnam probably thought what they had made would be something the rest of the country would emulate and try to achieve, and to a certain extent that has been the case. It has no history, and the people there work hard every day to make the rest of the country become irrelevant. And, this is very important to note, the values embedded in the concept that underlie Gangnam are not Korean values, but rather are Western ones.

It is the home of money, the financial and political power that comes from money and, as well, the home of those who rule and control the important things that happen here, including of course, those handful of families that comprise the three or four most vital industrial conglomerates, the chaebol, along with the larger handful that ally themselves. And in order to maintain any sense of credibility for such entitlement it's not only necessary to possess wealth and position but also to display the trappings and accessories that go with it.

Thus it spreads, and in a small, somewhat tightly knit and homogenous society such as we see in Korea, attitudes like this produce the constant struggle to attain places for their children in one of the top three universities, the movement of families whenever possible to areas of the city with greater and greater prestige, the consciousness for many that making the money is not quite so important as to be seen spending it.

Youth and beauty can be bought if you have enough to pay for it, so goes the message, an imported car will get you a pretty girl, and status and influence, one's place in a pecking order, are far more important than true friendships among equals and respect that is earned by demonstrated ability. Wisdom displayed through compassion and real knowledge of life are not nearly as important as who you are invited to play screen golf with, or how many of your kids will be admitted to one of the best schools. This is the Gangnam ethos, in a nutshell.

It's all image, completely and totally that — because, by the way, Gangnam-gu in Seoul, South Korea is also home of GuyongMaeul, one of the oldest and poorest shanty-villages on the peninsula. See also Luc Forsyth's article in these pages. (Groove Korea, May 2012)

Gangnam is all about that flash and dazzle, expensive meals paid for on a credit card whose limit gets higher and higher every time you pay it off — in many ways, Gangnam represents the worst of what has been going on in America and Europe for the last couple of centuries, along with the wholesale banishment of anything that is in any way unique about this peninsula.

But that might be changing. Unless they work for one of the three largest conglomerates — whose main corporate headquarters are all in Gangnam,

by the way — more and more of my Korean acquaintances are willing to say that they prefer living where they do, and are not trying to find a way to get their families across the river and into a high-priced apartment, the prices of which get driven up by speculation as much as by actual market demand. Some are telling me they want to live in a Korea where everyone has enough in order to be happy, rather than a Korea where everyone strives to have way too much.

Consider last fall's mayoral election, a very close race between a liberal and progressive candidate against a fiscally conservative member of the ruling party. Although polls and the final vote tallies showed a narrow gap in terms of numbers, the conservative candidate lost, having carried majorities in only her own district, Gangnam, and that of its immediate neighbor, Songpa. A resident of that southern side of the river, she had been criticized in the weeks prior to the vote for having attended a posh day-spa with a yearly membership fee of 1 million won. The issues in that election had voters deciding between a free lunch program in the public schools (the progressive candidate) or a public works program to build one more bridge across the Han River to connect the older parts of the city with Gangnam (the conservatives).

I'm happy to report that more and more of the Koreans of my acquaintance are coming to see that money and position are only tools we use to attain security for the future and some measure of happiness in the present — that a career they can give love to is better than a job to be detested, and that what they do for a living is secondary to the larger goal of simply living. That might be anecdotal, and it might be inaccurate, but I hope it's a trend.

"Gangnam Style" is a hit right now, and at six weeks running it has had greater longevity than most K-pop songs that get released. I'm not sure I believe that Mr. Park was composing an anthem in revolt against the mindset that is represented in the Gangnam lifestyle, and I suspect not. It will be forgotten soon, and I can't say for sure if the people enjoying it are using it to give any thought to what Gangnam is all about, or see the song as a device to think about what they see as important in life — though it might instead be a reflection of the fact that a lot of Koreans are already doing so. Psy will undoubtedly have a fair amount of clout in the local music industry, at least for a while, and it will be interesting to watch what he does with it. 🎵

### Ed. note:

A slightly altered version of this article appeared in The Three Wise Monkeys on Sept. 2. (<http://thethreewisemonkeys.com>).





In this song, at least, he's not speaking even one syllable of unwanted truth to actual places of power in this country — the Blue House, the corporate-sponsored media based in Yeouido, the head offices of Samsung and Hyundai — but rather he's painting a caricature of the societal effects of those power structures, and the way people react to them.







# between darkness & light

Interview with photojournalist Steve McCurry

**Story by** Belle Nachmann / **Photos by** Steve McCurry

In a career spanning some three decades, Steve McCurry has seen and experienced more than most of us will in a lifetime. He has worked in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Cambodia, Burma and many other countries, boldly capturing images of civil wars in the Middle East, the devastation of the Kuwaiti oil fires of 1991, grounded Japanese fishing boats following the tsunami in 2011 and harrowing scenes of New York City firefighters and ambulances from 9/11.

But what makes McCurry one of the most iconic photojournalists of our time is his inexhaustible talent for and devotion to documenting and celebrating human life with a still image. He takes viewers around the world to Tibetan babies with smudged faces, Shaolin monks training, Bangladeshi boys enjoying a splash, the inside of a shadowy Pakistani classroom mid-lesson, and his best-known subject, the green-eyed, 12-year-old Afghani orphan Sharbat Gula.

His abilities have earned him a myriad of awards, including the prestigious Robert Capa Gold Medal, the National Press Photographers' Association award for Magazine Photographer of the Year, an unprecedented four first prizes in the World Press Photo contest, and the Olivier Rebot Award, which he won twice.

Despite the wide recognition for his work, he humbly says his name is "rarely recognized." His character is modest and light-hearted, his insights pragmatic and unpretentious. That is reflected in his work, which respectfully shares a unique perspective to how others live, and offers us human existence with a wide appreciation for diversity and exoticism.

Groove Korea sat down with Steve McCurry during his three-day visit to Seoul in September to discuss the "rush" of working in conflict zones, his near-death experiences, his insights on working in Asia and his current exhibition, "Between Darkness and Light."



## ► Into Afghanistan

After living in India for two years in the 1970s, McCurry found himself in Pakistan as the Soviets' grasp was quickly closing Afghanistan off from foreign journalists. He met a group of Afghan refugees who helped smuggle him into the country, where he was able to cover the internal conflict in 1979. He emerged barely recognizable, with facial hair and garb that made him indistinguishable from the locals. Having sewn the rolls of film into his clothing to get the images out of the area, McCurry was among the first put a face to the devastation of the Russian invasion – which consequently ignited dissent.

After 12-year-old Afghani girl Sharbat Gula's parents were killed during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the late '70s, she and her four siblings fled the country to a refugee camp in Pakistan. It was there that McCurry met and photographed her in 1984.

Her face, which appeared on the cover of National Geographic the following year, became an emblem for the conflict in Afghanistan and the hardship of refugees worldwide. At the camp, McCurry was not aware he had just shot what would be considered one of the most recognizable photographs of all time: "I knew at the time that it was an extraordinary portrait, but you know, shooting film, and there's all this commotion, and then the light, it's hard to really know ... But I never dreamed it would end up on the cover or eventually become an icon."

After 18 years and five failed attempts to find her, McCurry, along with National Geographic, located and identified Sharbat Gula in 2002 using biometric technology that matched her iris patterns to those in the photograph. "We didn't know if she was alive, and it was good because we really wanted to try and find her and help her, because she was famous, and she wasn't reaping any of the benefit of that," McCurry said. "I think that she eventually realized this was going to be a big benefit (to be located). When at first we found her, she didn't know what to think."

## A dangerous life

Capturing the consequences of civil and international conflict is one of McCurry's focuses and greatest strengths. He navigates war zones seemingly with ease, crossing volatile borders as if they were your back fence. Over the past three decades he has recorded the Cambodian Civil War, the Islamic insurgency in the Philippines, the Iran-Iraq War, the Lebanese Civil War, the Gulf War, the ongoing war in Afghanistan and the conflict in Tibet. He likes the rush of working in these areas and when asked how he enters countries as a journalist so easily, he plainly answered, "Well, I wear a lot of different hats," implying that officials make different assumptions about his occupation. "I'm also around that age where one could plausibly be retired," the 62-year-old added.

McCurry has lived a dangerous life to get where he is now. He has been arrested in Pakistan and Burma, and has been on the brink of serious in-

jury or death on various occasions. In Afghanistan, he survived mortar, machine gun fire and having his hotel room being broken into at gunpoint in the early hours. In Bombay, India, he was beaten and nearly drowned by a group of youths during the Ganesh Chaturthi festival. After all that, he states his closest brush with death was a light plane crash during an aerial photography project. "I was in an airplane in Slovenia, and the plane crashed. It was a small plane, a two-seater, and it went into a lake. And I was upside down in the water," he said. "I was banged up. I had a seat belt on and all that, I had a helmet, but I had a lot of bruises."

"The purpose of the flight was to get pictures, but that didn't happen. I lost the camera," he said with a laugh.

Yet some observers still describe McCurry's work as a product of him "being in the right place, at the right time." The professional tends to have a more pragmatic view: "I think that if you are out working every day, you're bound to happen across extraordinary situations ... There are so many variables that go into that, being presented with an extraordinary situation: Are you going to be able to have the composure and the wherewithal to make a good picture? I think if you're in the game for 20 or 30 years, you're bound to."

He describes the harrowing images taken of Ground Zero in New York on 9/11 as some of his most challenging shots: "Because it was so hard to actually get access to the situation, it was emotionally draining, but also profound in its nature."

On the morning of September 12, amid the extreme security enforced by police, firemen and soldiers, he cut through a boundary fence to get access to the site. He was eventually removed by the extremely hostile emergency workers, and threatened to have his head "beaten in with a shovel." Yet, once again, McCurry was not overly concerned for his personal safety, only for the need to document one of the most appalling moments in the world's history.

**"If you want to be a photographer, you have to photograph. Also, it's something that takes time, and there's an element of craft that needs to be developed. It takes discipline, passion and commitment. It's not something you can casually do, any more than you can casually be a writer, a violinist, a surgeon, or a carpenter."** — Steve McCurry



Tibetan baby

Photography by Steve McCurry





In reality, luck plays no part in McCurry's career. As said in his favorite quote by Teddy Roosevelt, "The credit belongs to the man actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood." With an approximate catalogue of one million images and documentation of six continents over three decades — he's been to India alone over 90 times — the formula of McCurry's success is a no-brainer: time, patience and hard work.

"If you want to be a writer, you have to write. And if you want to be a photographer, you have to photograph. Also, it's something that takes time, and there's an element of craft that needs to be developed. It takes discipline, passion and commitment. It's not something you can casually do, any more than you can casually be a writer, a violinist, a surgeon or a carpenter," he said.

Despite being a benchmark in his profession and immortalized by his iconic "Afghan Girl" photograph, Steve McCurry is a strikingly unpretentious man, who could be your neighbor, your teacher or your dad. He is soft-spoken, relaxed and patient. His diet is simple, without meat or spices, and he says he prefers to be an observer rather than participate. He values subject matter and composition, and his shots are defined by his courage and personable nature, not his equipment.

When asked to choose the most interesting subject he's photographed in all his years, he answers, without hesitation: "Aung San Suu Kyi."

For 15 of the last 21 years, the Burmese military government had detained Suu Kyi, the political opposition leader and chairperson of the National League for Democracy there, on the grounds that she was "likely to undermine the community peace and stability" of Burma. In 1991 Suu Kyi won the Nobel Peace prize for "her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights." She later used the prize money to create a health and education trust for the Burmese people.

McCurry traveled to the country to photograph her in 1996 for the New York Times. In November 2010, Suu Kyi's 15 years of house arrest came to an end. "She is a remarkable person," McCurry said. "She was under house arrest for 20 years ... and I think that must have been very difficult for somebody who had traveled the world and come from a very illustrious family."

### The present and the future

After 30 years of hard work, McCurry is finally able to relax a little in recent times. He is a member of Magnum Photos — an international cooperative of photography's elite — and a frequent and senior contributor to National Geographic, as well as countless other publications including Time Magazine. The fruit of his labors is sweet. With numerous assistants, an office in New York fitted out with his own printing lab, and strong relationships with other big names in the industry — he was granted a request to Kodak for the last ever roll of Kodachrome film — he is able to comfortably enjoy his craft.


McCurry, who was on his fifth visit to the peninsula for the opening of his current exhibition, "Be-

tween Darkness and Light," enjoys frequenting Korea's temples and monasteries and working throughout the Asian continent. "I've been working here (in Asia) for more than 30 years. Asia has a wider range of culture and geography than any other place in the world. In Asia, you have this great disparity between the rich and the poor, people living in an ancient way in a modern world. This is where the action is, photographically, culturally and personally."

He aims to inspire his audience and exhibit images that people like and enjoy. In "Between Darkness and Light," his second exhibition in Korea, McCurry presents 100 exceptional pieces of artwork which are a thematic look at his use of light and color.

In every exhibit, there is a strong pulse of life. He evokes emotions from delight to despair, but doesn't try to convince his viewers of anything.

"It's kind of a thematic look at my use of light," he said of the exhibition. "Most of my way of shooting is in fairly low light conditions. My eyes are very sensitive to the light and I find I prefer working in less light. I find it more mysterious, or more provocative. People photograph better in situations where there's more emotion."

"Between Darkness and Light" runs until Oct. 21 at Seoul Arts Center. 

### More info

"Between Darkness and Light"

When: Closes Oct. 21

Where: V-Gallery, Seoul Arts Center

For more info, visit [sac.or.kr/eng](http://sac.or.kr/eng)

### Directions

From Seocho Station (Line 2), Exit 3, walk straight two blocks to the three-way intersection and turn left. SAC is on your right.

From Nambu Terminal Station (Line 3), Exit 5, walk straight for 5 min. and turn left at Tom n Toms Coffee. Walk straight to the three-way intersection and SAC is across the street.

**"Asia has a wider range of culture and geography than any other place in the world. In Asia, you have this great disparity between the rich and the poor, people living in an ancient way in a modern world. This is where the action is, photographically, culturally and personally."** — Steve McCurry











# A fish out of water

Artist feature: Craig Stuart

Story by Lisa Pollack / Artwork by Craig Stuart

➤ If you've been to a fish market in Korea, you may have been confronted with flashbacks from your last screening of "Alien." Fish, rays and other sea life beckon to the passing throngs, strung up and crucified on wooden frames. Hung like victims of a vicious inquisition, the impaled subjects add a chill to the air.

While some see dinner and others are perplexed by this striking display, one Scottish expat found it compelling. Inspired by the creatures' unnatural distortion, Craig Stuart's mind was set ablaze with wonderment. In an age when the convergence of man's influence and nature's intention reigns supreme, Stuart set out to examine this theme.

"It's the whole idea of fishermen; they catch small fish and then hook them up to their line and throw them back to try to get the bigger fish." Thinking what might happen if those same hooks were baited with Flounder's freakish cousin, he thought, "Man tries to mimic nature in order to catch it, so how ludicrous would it be to see this thing that used to be a ray back in the ocean?" Like the new kid at lunch, would they be well received or cast off with wary discomfort?


Turning it over in his mind, Stuart raised questions: "What attracts a fish? What makes a fish go and investigate something? And what if one of those things it is investigating is actually a fisherman's lure?"

In the thrill of the chase, it's easy to lose sense of your surroundings. Empathizing with the unsuspecting fish, he thought, "They may be attracted to this thing from afar — to check it out, to see what it is — but there's an element of danger there with a net lurking about."

It was this thought process that Stuart set out to capture in his series of paintings, "Fish Food" (mixed media on canvas). Wanting to explore how these strange beings might be received once again in their natural habitat, he took to the canvas from his home studio in Donghae, Gangwon Province.

Using a technique reliant on water's spontaneity, Stuart began each piece by priming the canvas. Next, he added color, "usually something organic — dark brown or blue." He'd dilute this oil-based color and then add water. "Obviously, the two don't mix. I pour the mixture on the canvas, and as the oil paint is on the surface, I'll manipulate it and move it around so it finds its own path." The notion of relying on water to dictate the final piece intrigues him. "It's a lot of randomness, and then control from then on."

Invoking a maritime theme, the series covers a spectrum from a twirling ray in "Lure" to thousands of tiny dried fish featured in "Confusion." Meant to inspire a sense of curiosity, the works raise questions that aren't always answered.

"I don't see why we always have to mess with nature," Stuart contemplates. "It's just human nature to mess with stuff." As a consequence, like Stuart's works, it's important to remember that a mess almost always requires water to clean up. 

Invoking a maritime theme, Stuart's series covers a spectrum from a twirling ray in "Lure" to thousands of tiny dried fish featured in "Confusion." Meant to inspire a sense of curiosity, the works raise questions that aren't always answered.

## Paintings

- "Lure" — 2011 - Mixed media on canvas - 50cm x 73cm
- "Return" — 2011 - Mixed media on canvas - 91cm x 117cm
- "Parched" — 2011 - Mixed media on canvas - 50cm x 73cm
- "Confusion" — 2012 - Mixed media on canvas - 117cm x 91cm



# On your mark, get set, action!

48 Hour Film Project returns to Seoul

Story by Ben Landau / Photos by John Weeke and 48 Hour Film Project



➤ It's that time of year again. Filmmaking junkies from all over town are gearing up to once again brave sleep deprivation, caffeine overload and wedding-level stress — all to make a movie in just 48 hours.

After successful runs in 2009 and 2010, the 48 Hour Film Project is making its way back to Seoul from Oct. 19-21, and space is already limited.

Started in 2001 by Mark Ruppert in Washington, D.C., the 48 Hour Film Project is an international competition in which — you guessed it — participants must make a short film in the span of 48 hours. Back then, Ruppert and his friends were simply curious about whether it was possible to make a watchable movie in 48 hours. Twelve years later, the Film Project is the largest competition of its kind with over 50,000 adrenaline-filled auteurs expected to make 4,000 films in 120 cities around the world in 2012.

The winning crew internationally will even get the chance to have their film showcased as part

of the Cannes Film Festival's Short Film Corner in 2013 and be recognized as a breakout star of the event.

On Friday night, each team is given a character, a prop, a line of dialogue and a genre, all of which must be included in a brief 4- to 7-minute movie, then work tirelessly for 48 hours to submit the final product by the Sunday night deadline. That's two sleepless days to write, shoot, edit and score an entire film. After a couple nights' rest, the projects are then presented in a screening for the audience to vote on the winner.

To most, this experience may sound stressful. But for aspiring filmmakers, directors, producers, photographers, writers, actors, make-up artists, costume designers, stylists, builders, craftspeople and sound engineers, they simply crave it.

"The real payoff is seeing all your hard work on the big screen. That's a great feeling," said Sonny of Sonny Side Films, whose work on "The Blind Date" was Runner Up for Best Film in 2010.

"I think it was a great experience. It tested me

in a lot of ways, many of which were unexpected," he recalled. "I learned a lot about working with others, which is the foundation of any successful production. It's a lot of fun, but it's an amazing challenge, too."

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"I think it was a great experience. It tested me in a lot of ways, many of which were unexpected. The real payoff is seeing all your hard work on the big screen. That's a great feeling."  
— Sonny of Sonny Side Films, 2010 runner-up





Of course, with such a torrid pace, part of the fun is embracing the madness.

In 2010, John Weeke, a film graduate from New York University, and his team Backsliders went to work on "Joon," a tragicomedy about "a 75-year-old extraterrestrial whose father left him on Earth after he fought too much with his sister in the back seat of the family spaceship."

"At one point — in the middle of November — the main actor took off most of his clothes, covered his exposed skin with damp sheets of sushi-type seaweed (the Project's required prop), and then spun around screaming, 'I can feel the music.' I might like to forget that, but I simply cannot."

But thanks to the seaweed stunt, "Joon" went on to win awards for Best Use of Prop and Character.

Additionally, there are awards for Best Directing, Best Writing, Best Cinematography, Best Editing, Best Actor, Best Musical Score, Best Sound Design, Best Special Effects, Best Use of Genre and Best Use of Line.

While the opportunity to "make it" is what pushes many, it's the rewarding, communal experience of moviemaking that keeps them coming back for more.

In 2010, Joseph Kim entered the Seoul competition as a producer and a writer. He met art director Young Lee at the event when the two joined teams.

"It was a great experience working together," he said.

Their team won Best Dialogue for the competition that year and the duo were inspired to take on a leadership role in the event. This year they are organizing the Seoul stop of the project with the hope of encouraging more artists to partake in this year's festivities.

"I wanted to give back since it was such a wonderful experience and I wanted to do this for the expat and Korean communities to come together under a creative umbrella."


In a city with such a vibrant arts scene, Kim sees events like the 48 Hour Film Project as necessary.

"I feel like both South Koreans and the international community have a hunger to showcase their creativity. I have met so many creative people in South Korea whether they be Korean or expat, and they all had no place to show their creativity to an international audience," he added. Not anymore.

Interested parties should register immediately, as the Oct. 9 deadline for registration is quickly approaching. Regular information sessions are held at the 48 Hour Film Project Seoul's office near Gasan Digital Complex Station, exit 4, until Oct. 18, and a special Meet and Greet event — where solo participants can pick up a team — is set for Oct. 6.

In addition to the Cannes prize, Seoul's winning team will see their film screened at an award weekend joining Best of City filmmakers from around the world. The winning team will also receive 5 million won from Megabox and a slew of other prizes.

All films will be shown at the Megabox movie theater in Dongdaemun from Nov. 1-3, with tickets available for 8,000 won.

It may be exhausting, but the experience is invaluable. At the very least, you could be the next screaming guy wrapped in seaweed. 

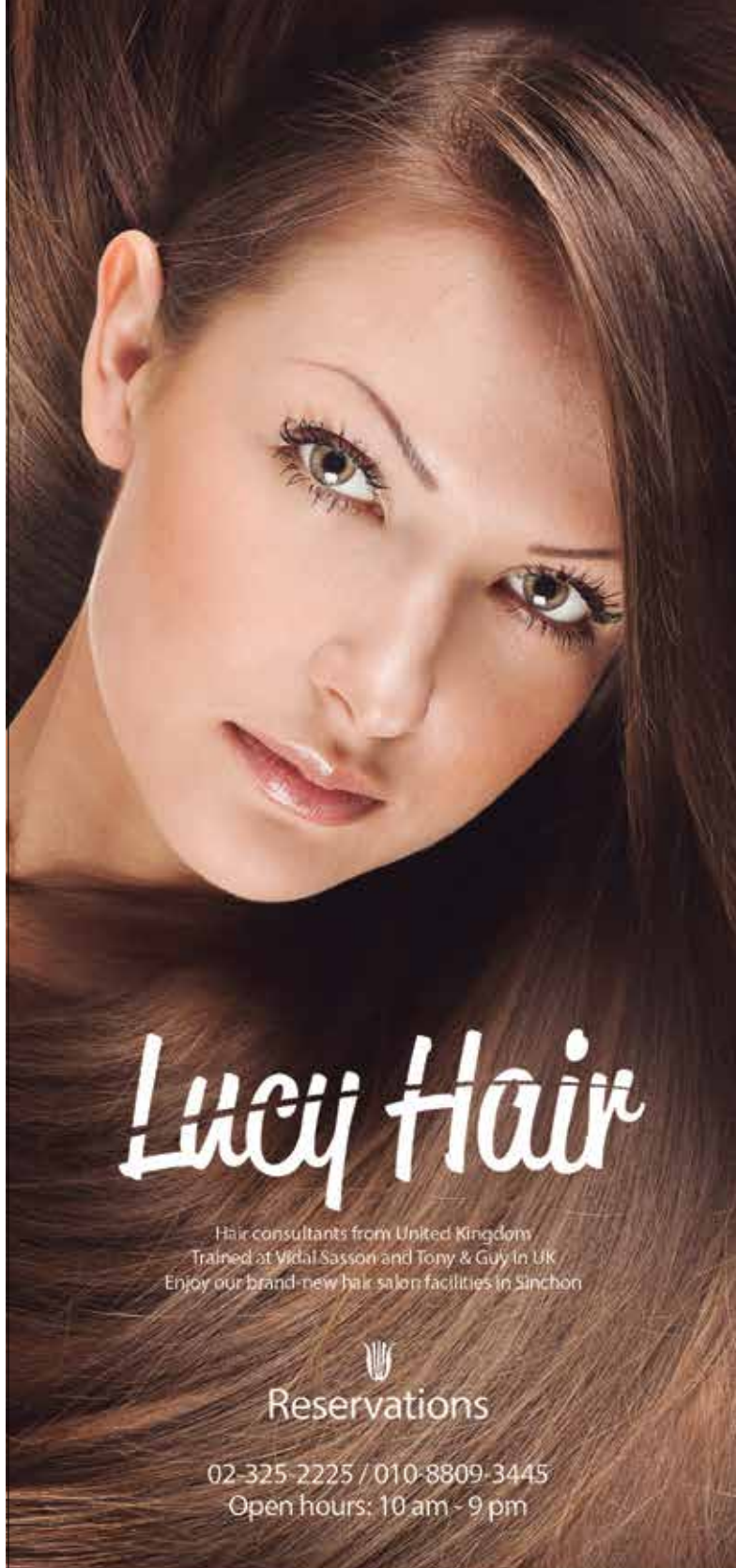
**More info:** The 48 Hour Film Project Seoul 2012

When: Oct. 19-21

Regular deadline: Oct. 9


Registration: 200,000 won per team until Oct. 9; 250,000 won thereafter until spots are filled

Visit the official site at [48hourfilm.com/en/seoul](http://48hourfilm.com/en/seoul) and on Facebook at [facebook.com/48film](https://www.facebook.com/48film).



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# Taking on the Hongdae establishment

One music venue's 'war against K-pop'

Story by Daniel Joseph Vorderstrasse

Photos courtesy Powwow Community Photo Team

➤ Anything goes at Powwow. Started by Seo Hye-jin, an artist more commonly known as SSeo, Powwow aims to take what's good from Hongdae's music and art scene — the creativity, the originality — and leave the rest behind. Expect live music of all genres, movie nights, standup comedy, art exhibitions and performances. Artists are also invited to create work at Powwow and display it on the Community Wall.

It's a mix of people representing all avenues of art.

Powwow promises to initiate change. Tired not only of K-pop and the status quo in the live music scene, the same bands, competition and money that dominate Hongdae, Powwow "wants to be the lever to change the things we want changed in the community," said Sean Patrick Maylone. "We see this as a music venue with a war against K-pop. A lot of people complain, but you have to do something to change it."

SSeo teamed up with four partners, who form the musical backbone of the enterprise. Maylone and Alex Ameter specialize in indie bands; Ki Seok Seo brings his Korean punk underground knowledge to the table and Donny Sim dabbles in electronic music.

...





"For small bands, it is getting hard to play in Hongdae because people don't leave Hongdae anymore. The same bands have been playing in the same venues for five years. We are creating a type of culture for new talent to be displayed. Our main focus is creating a scene in Itaewon."

— Ki Seok Seo



"The idea is we are coming together and sharing ideas as a group. Everybody is on equal footing," explained Ameter.

Seo added: "We all have different ideas and are blending them together."

The venue is a stage for people to experience new ideas and appreciate modern art.

Gallery owner SSeo is a painter, but dabbles in almost every artistic medium. She has replicated artistic masterpieces and created controversial projects. Most notably, her bus art exhibition caused quite a fuss in Korea's art hierarchy. She was criticized by traditionalists for straying from "what art should be" and even threatened with academic failure.

"One thing I noticed in the Korean music and art world is that everything is very separated and its own thing. We really want to make a community space and bring things together. Hence the name Powwow," said Maylone.

The art, created by local artists, is available for purchase. "Not only can people come and see some great bands, they can also walk around the room, which serves as an art gallery, too," said Ameter. "This concept also gives us a lot of flexibility with the events held at the venue. We can serve as anything from music venue, art gallery, community meeting spot, to rehearsal space. We are very flexible and modular."

Community is key. People bring their own visions, making Powwow artist- and musician-centric. "We will create a synthesis of ideas, having artists work together. We're very determined to be as unique as possible to draw people from the streets and give them an experience," said Maylone.

Ameter added, "We want to get a lot of people to get a taste. There will be small events to bring people together and encourage people to interact."

Located five minutes from Itaewon and around the corner from Gyeongnidan and Haebangchon, organizers hope Powwow's accessibility will help generate interest.

### Going against the grain

It's a pushback against the Hongdae establishment.

Seo explained that veteran Hongdae bands are squeezing out newer, younger acts. "There is so much competition for bigger bands. For small bands, it is getting hard to play in Hongdae because people don't leave Hongdae anymore. The same bands have been playing in the same venues for five years. We are creating a type of culture for new talent to be displayed. Our main focus is creating a scene in Itaewon."

"It's not just for foreigners, but mixing Koreans and foreigners. Also, we'll be a strong influence on helping the Korean underground scene grow," described Seo. "By having Korean artists and musicians interact with foreign artists, we can accomplish this and make things better. It's going to be a challenge. I'm from Hongdae's music scene and it will be hard to draw people away. We are up for the challenge."

Sim agrees. "It will be a fun challenge to put on events and create a mixed atmosphere to enjoy. This is such a huge opportunity. There is so much potential here. It's not exactly in Itaewon, so getting the word out will be a challenge. There is more of a Korean scene popping up and doing collaborations. The food is great and we love parts of Itaewon, but want to change it for the better. We are open for the community. All genres and artists are welcome." 🎧

**Online:** To find out more about Powwow, go to their Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/powwowseoul](http://www.facebook.com/powwowseoul)) or website ([powwowseoul.wordpress.com](http://powwowseoul.wordpress.com)). To submit ideas or for general inquiries, email [seoulpowwow@gmail.com](mailto:seoulpowwow@gmail.com).

**Directions:** From Noksapyeong Station, Line 6, Exit 1, cross the street towards Itaewon. Turn left after crossing and walk along the brick wall away from Itaewon. Walk about 5 minutes; it will be on your right.



# Picasso, Einstein and Elvis come to Seoul

'Picasso at the Lapin Agile'  
hits Probationary Theatre stage in late October

Story and Photo by Anna Sebel

➤ After a season of sexually explicit and controversial shows, Probationary Theatre aims to show that their latest offering, Steve Martin's absurdist comedy "Picasso at the Lapin Agile," can do more than shock Seoul audiences.

This family-friendly event tells the fictional story of a young Picasso and Albert Einstein meeting in a Parisian bar (the Lapin Agile) on Oct. 8, 1904.

Set at a time when both men were on the verge of an amazing idea (Einstein will publish his special theory of relativity a year later and Picasso will paint "Les Femmes d'Alger" in 1907) they have a lengthy debate about the value of genius and talent whilst a host of characters pop in and out of the bar.

Written in 1993 by Hollywood actor-comedian Steve Martin, this intelligent comedy takes a look at life, art, love, fidelity, sex, science, the theory of relativity and the 20th century.

"It's witty, accessible and works on many levels," director Liam Mitchinson said of the script. "I can't wait to see what a Seoul audience makes of it."

Mitchinson, who played the role of Einstein in a 2006 production in his native Australia, says the show manages to be thought-provoking and light hearted.

"It's hard to imagine a speech about the special theory of relativity being comprehensible, let alone funny, but it was. Playing Einstein gave me a great opportunity to learn more about his work and theories, just as the actor playing Picasso got a greater appreciation of how his art changed the 20th century."

White Box Theatre Artistic Director Desiree Munro is equally proud of the selection of material for their October season. "It's not often you see some-

thing that makes you laugh and also teaches you something. The playwright has managed to create something that's both entertaining and educational."

"Mildly educational," Mitchinson added. "Considering Elvis appears towards the end of the show, it could hardly be called historically accurate."

The play will be making history for other reasons, as it will be the first period piece in the theater's 10-year history. While there have been previous shows set in the 1960s and 1970s (last month's production of David Mamet's "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" being their most recent), this will be the theater's first foray into the early 1900s.

Munro admitted that acquiring 1900 Parisian period costumes for a cast of 12 in Korea did not come without its challenges. "Working on a small budget certainly means you get creative; we can't just buy purpose-made costumes, so we've had to learn a lot." The experience is bound to prove invaluable though, with "Picasso" being the first of many period productions, including a November presentation of Ibsen's "A Doll's House." 📺

**Details:** "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" runs from Oct. 20-28, every Saturday (8 p.m.) and Sunday (4 p.m.) at White Box Theatre, Hyochang Park, Seoul. All tickets are 15,000 won.

**Online:** For advance bookings, more information and a map to the theatre, go to [www.probationarytheatre.com](http://www.probationarytheatre.com).





# At the box office

October releases

By Dean Crawford

## Ted

Directed by Seth MacFarlane



Oct.  
3

Comedy  
106 minutes

➤ Thomas Bertram Lance, the director of the Office of Management and Budget in President Jimmy Carter's 1977 administration, is widely attributed with coining the phrase, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

One writer/director who seems to have taken this phrase to heart more than most is Seth MacFarlane, the creator of the hugely successful sitcom "Family Guy," where the leading male character is friends with a dog that can talk. He then made the sitcom "American Dad!," where the leading male character is friends with an alien that can talk. Now, MacFarlane has decided to leave his comfort zone and come up with new and original ideas for the big screen in the shape of "Ted." This is a film in which Mark Wahlberg plays the leading male character, who is best friends with a teddy bear — that can talk.

Marky Mark plays John Bennett, who, as a 7-year-old boy, made a wish upon a star for his new, favorite teddy bear to become real so they could stay best friends forever. His wish is heard, granting Ted, voiced by MacFarlane himself, the gift of life. However, as John gets older, so does Ted, who becomes a pot-smoking, beer-drinking, foul-mouthed womanizer. What once seemed like a magical relationship destined for the history books turns into the adult/bear equivalent of "Beavis and Butt-head." However, this relationship is also damaging the only thing

P R E V I E W

John loves more than Ted, which is his girlfriend Lori, played by "Family Guy" star Mila Kunis. John is forced to choose between his best friend for life and the love of his life.

I had been interested in seeing Ted for a long time, as I got several laughs from the red-band trailer alone, but wondered whether it would simply be an overly long episode of "Family Guy" or if MacFarlane would be able to leave his comfort zone and craft a solid film. The answer is both. Fans of "Family Guy" will be pleased to know that the brand of humor is the same, with crass jokes and pop culture references aplenty. The show's recognizable comedic flashbacks are also included. Yet MacFarlane still manages to craft some semblance of a narrative structure, albeit a flimsy one that is simply a vehicle for the next fart, fat or dick joke.

In some ways, "Ted" could be considered a deeply philosophical film asking the question: "What does it mean to be human?" And in some ways, "Ted" could also be considered a modern-day, coming-of-age story about a boy who is forced to look inside his soul and choose between his past and his future. However, considering it features the quote "Fuck you thunder! You're just God's farts!" — in some ways ... it probably couldn't.

## Looper

Directed by Rian Johnson



Oct.  
11

Sci-fi/action  
118 minutes

➤ Rian Johnson first burst onto the indie scene seven years ago with the cult classic, "Brick," a modern-day film noir focusing on a high school student's desire to find his missing ex-girlfriend. His follow up, "The Brothers Bloom," which starred Adrien Brody and Mark Ruffalo, flew relatively under the radar and failed to wow the critics in the way "Brick" had done.


It's been four years since his last film, but now Johnson is returning with the sci-fi action flick "Looper," in which a hit man from the year 2047 has been assigned the strangest of missions: kill a version of himself from 30 years in the future.

Joseph Gordon-Levitt plays Joe, a hit man for hire based in the American Midwest. The head office of his employers is in Shanghai, and it is from there that they dispatch the targets they want Joe to kill. However, they are not sent by plane or boat, but physically sent back in time through a portal located in the year 2077. Joe is only paid if his targets are exterminated, but this is made difficult when he recognizes his latest mark as himself 30 years in the future, played by Bruce Willis. His target escapes, forcing Joe to flee from his employers, running for his life while

P R E V I E W

simultaneously trying to kill his 55-year-old self.

Not only does the premise of the film sound interesting, but so does the fact that the film is based on Philip K. Dick's short story "The Loop and Loom." The style appears to be borrowing from some other sci-fi classics, too. "Blade Runner" redesigned the way people thought about the future in film by promoting the idea that when going forward, you must look to the past. "Looper" is no different, with the buildings and costume design all looking like they come from the 1920s, albeit with a futuristic tint. A huge effort also went into the physical effects, as Gordon Levitt went through three hours of make-up a day, including a prosthetic nose, to make himself look like a young Bruce Willis.

In addition, Badass Digest reported the exciting news that Shane Carruth is doing "some effects for the time-travel sequences." Carruth, of course, is the director of one of the deepest and most thought-provoking time-travel movies ever, "Primer." That film was unmistakably low-budget, but is still regarded as one of the best time-travel movies of all time, so it will be interesting to see what these two creative forces come up with. 



# Korean DVD corner

October reviews

By Dean Crawford

## The Yellow Sea (황해)

Directed by Na Hong-jin



Rated  
**18** Drama / Thriller  
157 minutes

> With titles such as "Oldboy," "I Saw the Devil" and "The Man From Nowhere" gaining international acclaim, Korean cinema has been rightly regarded as one of the world leaders in producing exciting, dynamic and violent thrillers. A film that had been touted as having the potential to top them all was the sophomore effort from acclaimed director Na Hong-jin, "The Yellow Sea."

"The Yellow Sea" begins in the Yanbian Province of China, a Korean Autonomous Prefecture, where Gu-nam is struggling to make ends meet. This is due to a large debt that he owes after paying for his wife to move to South Korea. He spends most of his time either fantasizing about his wife having an affair, or gambling, which gets him into trouble with gangsters.

This is when Korean mafia boss Mun Jung-hak offers Gu-nam a chance to pay off his debts: He has to go to South Korea to kill a businessman and bring back his finger as proof. Seeing this as an opportunity to not only clear his debts, but also find out why his wife hasn't yet been in contact, he accepts the mission.

While in Korea, Gu-nam carefully stalks his victim, plotting the best way to kill him, while also searching for his estranged wife. But when the time comes to take out the businessman, a strange set of events take place that leaves Gu-nam on the run from not only the police, but

R E V I E W

also the Chinese and Korean mafia.

"The Yellow Sea" opened to overwhelmingly positive reviews and is sitting on a certified fresh rating of 86 percent on Rotten Tomatoes. For the first hour of the film, I was in total agreement with this view. It was a slow-paced, interesting character study about one man's morality and what we are capable of when backed into a corner. However, once the deed takes place, the film turns into an overly long game of cat and mouse, with one too many chase scenes, which made it feel like a totally different film.

While still enjoyable, I was upset at the change from seemingly realistic, gritty drama to a film with an almost invincible villain who can survive not only stab wounds, but gunshots, too. The film still has its moments, with a lovely, tender ending that returned to the pacing of the opening hour, but an overly convoluted plot left me scratching my head and not really caring.

"The Yellow Sea" has been praised in all corners of the globe so there's no doubting the film's quality and Na Hong-jin's ability as a storyteller, but after all the hype, I was just expecting a little more.

R E V I E W

## The Chaser (추격자)

Directed by Na Hong-jin



Rated  
**18** Drama / Thriller  
125 Minutes

> Seeing as I appeared to be one of the few people who wasn't totally blown away by "The Yellow Sea," I felt it only right to give director Na Hong-jin another chance to justify the hype surrounding him by watching the film that made his name, "The Chaser."

Joong-ho is a disgraced former cop-turned-pimp. His business is in trouble because his girls are going missing before they can repay their debts, and are apparently being sold by a rival pimp. Joong-ho manages to track the rough location of the person he thinks is responsible, and forces one of his workers, Mi-jin, to accept a call and relay her location so Joong-ho can find him. However, he gets himself more than he bargained for, as his rival, Yeong-min, is no pimp, but a sadistic serial killer who traps Mi-jin in his home. From the initial chance encounter between Joong-ho and Yeong-min to the very end of the film, "The Chaser" takes many twists and turns leading up to an emotional and violent finale.


"The Chaser" is one of the best films I have seen in a long time and I can't believe I let it slip through the cracks. I don't want to use a cliché, but the film really is a roller-coaster ride and puts you through every emotion possible. The plot is slick, and the twists and turns are paced to perfection, keeping you on the edge of your seat in anticipation of what is to come next, which is one

of the most climatic final thirds of a film I've seen. It's just brilliant.

The two lead actors have a great chemistry, but it's a strange film, as you never fully side with anyone. Our hero, or in this case, our anti-hero, is an unlikeable, rude, violent, foul-mouthed ex-cop who had the chance to protect Mi-jin, but instead chooses to put her in danger to save his business.

Ha Jung-woo is menacing as the villain and the contrast between his vulnerable portrayal of Gu-nam in "The Yellow Sea" and his violent and brutal Yeong-min shows real talent. To his credit, you are never quite sure if Yeong-min is a master criminal or simply insane.

It's not without its flaws, of course. Certain scenes where the police are portrayed as inept buffoons and the way Joong-ho is allowed to escape seem a little implausible, but these little nitpicks are quickly forgotten as the film moves on.

You get the impression that if "The Chaser" weren't Korean, it would have been a totally different film, more Hollywood-esque, which says a great deal about the modern sensibilities of Korean cinema and what its creators are trying to do. Na Hong-jin is a great storyteller and the future of Korean cinema looks to be safe in his hands. 



# Tranquility *in Gapsyeong*

Jarasum International Jazz Festival Oct. 12.-14

Story by Groove staff

Photos courtesy Jarasum International Jazz Festival






> The Jarasum International Jazz Festival puts the world's best jazz musicians in a serene setting. With fresh autumn air and the colorful mosaic of Jara Island as a backdrop, more than 50 bands will make the ninth Jarasum International Jazz Festival the most popular yet.

Every year about 100,000 people make their way to Jara Island (Turtle Island) to witness what is now accepted as one of Asia's best displays of jazz. This year's festival will likely see north of 200,000 people in attendance.

The artists are top notch. First up is Jimmy Cobb, Larry Coryell, Joey DeFrancesco All Star Trio will hit the stage on Oct. 14. The Duke Ellington Orchestra will take the stage a day later. Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington is one of the most prolific composers of the 20th century.

Jarasum has come a long way since its debut in 2004, which the organizers admit was a "disaster" due to torrential rains. The 30,000 people in attendance and more than 100 performers may or may

not agree, but they could not have predicted that this wasteland on the Bukhangang River would, in the space of under a decade, become the focal point for jazz in Asia.

With autumn approaching its peak, the Gapyong area is a trove for outdoor activities. Nearby, the Garden of the Morning Calm is an arboretum consisting of 5,000 species of plants in a beautiful valley. Perhaps the most famous of Gapyong's attractions is Nami Island, a popular filming location for Korean movies and TV shows. Another popular place is Cheongpyeong Lake, which is surrounded by lush forests. For some city life head to Chuncheon, which is about a half-hour away. 

#### Tickets

General tickets: 35,000 won (one day),  
60,000 won (two days), 80,000 won  
(three days)  
Field tickets: 40,000 won (one day)

#### Directions

Take an intercity bus or a train to Gapyeong. Jaraseom Island is a 10 minute-walk from Gapyeong Intercity Bus Terminal and a 15 minute-walk from Gapyeong Station.





# Tradition and groove

Interview: Jimmy Cobb, Larry Coryell, Joey DeFrancesco All Star Trio

Interview by Matthew Lamers and Emma Piercy

Aritst: The Jimmy Cobb, Larry Coryell, Joey DeFrancesco All Star Trio

When: Sunday, 8-9 p.m.

Where: Jazz Island



➤ Jimmy Cobb, a largely self-taught musician, is one of the most accomplished drummers in jazz. He played in the legendary Miles Davis band in the 50's and 60's and can be heard on "Kind of Blue" — the highest selling jazz record of all time. Now his band — The Jimmy Cobb, Larry Coryell, Joey DeFrancesco All Star Trio — brings their jazz legacy to Korea.

Joey DeFrancesco, another Miles Davis alumnus, is one of the pioneers of jazz-rock. He started playing gigs of his own and alongside the likes of Richard "Groove" Holmes at a very young age.

Larry Correll redefined jazz electric guitar. His eclectic musical technique ranges from heavy electric playing to intricate acoustic guitar lines.

Together they make up one of the best three-pieces in the world — certainly worthy of the moniker "All Star Trio."

Groove Korea caught up with Joey DeFrancesco for a phone interview.

DeFrancesco described their music as sticking to tradition, but leaving room for innovation and improvisation. "The basis of it is swinging, because for me you 'gotta be swinging, then after that we try to create something within the traditional elements, but we try to bring it to a different place," he said.

This will be DeFrancesco's second trip to Korea. He performed here in 1995 with John McLaughlin.

**Groove Korea: You've been touring this summer as a trio and it's a delight to have a group of your talent bring their legacy of jazz to Korea, where the genre has relatively recently caught on. How did the three of you originally form as a group?**

Joey DeFrancesco: It came to my mind. I played with Jimmy Cobb a few years back and I played with Larry a few years back — with different groups, not together — so I thought to myself, it would be good to have a trio with three all-stars. They're the guys that I thought of, so we all got together and talked about it.

It started with a recording we did in March that's out now, of course. And that's how it came about.

**What inspires your music today? What is involved in your process of coming up with new material?**

Just living day-to-day. Things that happen in my life. Those experiences and different things that happen are how I get ideas for material. Most of the things don't come from sitting down and figuring out the music, harmony. It comes

from things that happen in your life. I think that happens when you get older. When you're young, everything's more technically based musically. But then you get more ideas from, you know, life. Just walking down the street, looking out the window, flying on a plane, walking on a beach — those kinds of things.

**You certainly have an extensive range of deeply rooted jazz feeding into your performances today. In your present approach to playing jazz, what kind of message do you wish to communicate with the audience?**

What I'm hoping is that if the musicians on the stage are enjoying playing with each other, and they're true to what they're doing and they're really doing the things that they love, then I'm pretty sure the audience is going to enjoy that. I mean, I'm not looking for any particular thing from the audience; hopefully they can get involved and have the feeling that we're feeling. I want them to feel how I feel. I'm not doing anything deliberately to make them feel one way or another.

Jazz is not like a pop show with a bunch of smoke and mirrors and things like that going on. It's about the music, and the musicians have to be serious about what they are doing on stage, but have fun at the same time. I don't think they have to look like they're miserable. They have to have fun. The audience is going to enjoy that more.

**It has been said that you're the successor to Jimmy Smith's legacy. What similarities do you note between yourself and Jimmy?**

Obviously (he is) a very big influence. The biggest thing is the sound. You know, Jimmy came up with the registrations on the organ for the sound — the most expressive element for you to have. ... So first of all, it's the settings on the organ that made the biggest impact on everybody that played organ. So it's the sound first. Then he did a lot of things harmonically, and he was very soulful with blues. ...

Between the two of us, it's the sound and approach; the continence in the playing. And everything he played means something. There's no holding back and there's no guessing — it's all yes, yes, yes when you're playing. Those are the similarities — more, I think, the approach and the feel than the notes. So when people say that I sound like Jimmy Smith — I think that's what they're hearing, because we play a lot different harmonically. I mean, that's just a fact. But for people who don't know about harmony and things like that, those who just go by feeling and approach, yeah that would be the closest comparison.





"I think something you can't get away from that a lot of these guys get away from is the groove and the feel. That's gotta be there no matter what style the music is. You can do all kinds of things with harmony, but without the groove, to me, it doesn't move people." — Joey DeFrancesco

**Is there any other particular person or place that had a big impact on your musical career that you wish you could work with more?**

I was very lucky; Jimmy Smith was one of my major influences and I got to know him and we worked together and did a lot of things together. And that was great.

Miles Davis would be my other huge influence. There are so many different aspects to Miles.

You take those two musicians and you got everything — you got the blues, you got classical, you got b-bop, you got avant garde — you have everything. And I got to play with Miles, but I would have liked to play with him more. Spend time with him. Unfortunately he's not here anymore. That would be one.

I really love the legendary players. That's the foundation for me. That's why I like playing with Jimmy Cobb. If I have a chance to play with Jimmy I'm going to grab it.

**One of the great features of jazz is its allowance for improvisation. Over the course of your trio's tour and history of playing together, has the group's style of improvisation changed much?**

That stuff is always changing. You make a record — you play it. But, you know, it evolves so much since you originally recorded it. The melodies and arrangements stay pretty similar, but the improvisation is different every night. We're always searching for something else.

**With regards to the trio's output, the combination of your prolific backgrounds and the diverse talents of yourself, guitarist Larry Coryell and drummer Jimmy Cobb must result in a wide range of sounds. You also released "Wonderful Wonderful" (High Records) this year. Is there a particular dominant stream of influence that you all steer towards in your performances?**

Yeah, I think musically, the approach to this group is very much in the tradition of some of Miles Davis' great groups. Particularly because we have Jimmy Cobb playing the drums. I'm such a fan of that music, as is Larry.

I know Larry is much older than I am, but in music that's not a factor anymore. All that goes out the window. It's about knowledge and cohesiveness of the musicians that play together. But we pretty much play in that genre. It's a very historical kind of music.

Within the tradition, we're also very innovative and moving forward with the improvisations. ...

The basis of it is swinging, because for me you gotta be swinging, then after that we try to create something within the traditional elements, but we try to bring it to a different place.

**How would you hope to see jazz evolve?**

I'd like to see harmony keep evolving and add a little more exotic scale into the music, but I think something you can't get away from that a lot of these guys get away from is the groove and the feel. That's gotta be there no matter what style the music is.

You can do all kinds of things with harmony, but without the groove, to me, it doesn't move people. If they can't feel it, then it's pointless. So before you get too far involved with something else, don't forget the tradition and the groove.





# The best

**Artist:** Michael Wollny's [em]

**When:** Sunday, 5-6 p.m.

**Where:** Jazz Island

Described as the "comet" of the German jazz scene by the German Financial Times, Michael Wollny is one of the most accomplished jazz pianists of the younger generation. He has been widely acclaimed for his trio [em], for defining new realms of 21st century jazz, marrying traditional jazz with European art music and 21st century drum & bass.



**Artist:** Abdullah Ibrahim

**When:** Friday, 8-9 p.m.

**Where:** Jazz Festival

Abdullah Ibrahim, perhaps the most celebrated South African pianist, is internationally renowned for his imaginative fusion of traditional African jazz and modern Western jazz. Formerly known as Dollar Band and a member of South Africa's first jazz band, the Jazz Epistles, Ibrahim fuses his childhood influences of religious music with his technical proficiency in classical music. Ibrahim's expressive improvisation and "no mind" approach transcend the audiences' auditory experience as an organic healing experience.

**Artist:** Maciej Obara Quartet

**When:** Saturday, 5-6 p.m.

**Where:** Jazz Island

This is the ambitious collaboration project formed by Polish alto saxophonist Maciej Obara. He teamed up with Dominik Wania, a prolific Polish jazz pianist, whom he first met in the band Tomasz Stanko. The quartet has been making waves in the European jazz scene and is reaching out to international audiences.



**Artist:** Jeff Lorber Fusion

**When:** Saturday, 8-9 p.m.

**Where:** Jazz Island

American Grammy Award nominated keyboardist, composer and producer Jeff Lorber is the father of the movement of jazz fusion, blending traditional jazz with rock, funk and R&B. His band, Jeff Lorber Fusion, has attracted international acclaim with their innovative marriage of jazz with electronic sounds and intricate harmonies.





**Artist:** The Duke Ellington Orchestra  
**When:** Sunday, 9:30-10:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Jazz Island

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington is one of the most prolific composers of the 20th century. Over the course of his career, he led his own orchestra, The Duke Ellington Orchestra, scored for movies, conducted stage musicals and toured the world. The Duke Ellington Orchestra was run by Edward for 22 years before his death in 1996. Its legacy has now been running for nearly nine decades.



**Artist:** The John Scofield Trio feat. Steve Swallow and Bill Stewart  
**When:** Sunday, 9:30-10:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Jazz Island

This power trio consists of long-time musical collaborators and friends John Scofield, bassist Steve Swallow and drummer Bill Stewart. They are the personification of the spirit of jazz, masters of producing original structured pieces and live improvisation.

**Artist:** Daniel Humair New Quartet Reunion  
**When:** Saturday, 6:30-7:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Jazz Island

Legendary jazz drummer Daniel Humair has led the way for modern jazz drumming. His extraordinary personal style of grace and power earned him two of the highest annual jazz honors awarded by the French Recording Academy and the Academic Charlie Cros.



**Artist:** Tizer feat. Chieli Minucci  
**When:** Friday, 6:30-7:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Jazz Island

Lao Tizer, a contemporary keyboardist and pianist, has been called "a torchbearer for the new generation of contemporary jazz." He has contributed to prestigious studios such as Universal and Pier 39 – Fisherman's Wharf San Francisco. Joined with Grammy-nominated guitarist, composer and arranger Chieli Minucci, the versatile duo appeals to a range of ages and tastes.



**Artist:** Tomasz Stanko Quartet  
**When:** Friday, 9:30-10:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Jazz Island

Tomasz Stanko is a Polish trumpeter and improviser. Since forming his first band when he was 20 and graduated from Cracow Music Academy, he has risen to become not only a front-runner in the Polish jazz scene, but is an established world-class figure, having been awarded the European Jazz Prize as Artist of the Year.





## Jarasum Artists

**Artist:** Babylove & The Van Dangos

**When:** Saturday, 1:20–2:10 a.m.

**Where:** Party Stage

This seven-member powerhouse ska band hailing from Copenhagen is a live act not to be missed. Having ripped a ska storm throughout Europe, they will be bringing their melodic riot to Korea. Their intense performances led by energetic front man Daniel Broman will have you dancing in the spirit of old school Jamaican ska and rocksteady music.

**Artist:** Barnacle Bill Trio

**When:** Saturday, 11–11:50 p.m.

**Where:** Jazz Cube

What started as the trio jamming in a basement rose to be Barnacle Bill Trio. Despite their contrasting backgrounds, their shared insatiable hunger to experiment and inspire one another produces a unique jazz vibe that will inspire the audience as well.

**Artist:** Butterscotch

**When:** Saturday, 1:30–2:30 p.m.

**Where:** Jazz Palette

Antoinette “Butterscotch” sang and beatboxed her way to the finals on A.merica’s Got Talent. Butterscotch delivers diverse performances, incorporating streams of jazz, R&B and hip-hop in her piano playing, singing and beatboxing. Holding the title of the first International World Female Beatbox Champion, she has inspired a young generation of female beatboxers. She is now spreading her passion for music around the globe, playing at prestigious Jazz festivals.

**Artist:** Diego Figueiredo Trio

**When:** Sunday, 2:30–3:30 p.m.

**Where:** Festival Lounge

Brazilian guitarist, producer and composer Diego Figueiredo is considered one of the best guitarists in the world. By the age of 15, he had already become a star in Brazil. His unique interpretation of traditional Brazilian music incorporates emotion and he never fails to impress with his spectacular virtuosity and improvisation. He has toured Brazil, the U.S. and Europe, performing his many recorded solo and collaboration albums.

**Artist:** Eyot

**When:** Friday, 1:30–2:30 p.m.

**Where:** Festival Lounge

Eyot, formed in 2009 in Serbia, consists of pianist Dejan Ilijic, drummer Sladjan Milenovic and guitar bassist Milos Voivodic. Their music combines classical piano, jazz, European folk music and is infused with a touch of smooth electronic effects.



**Artist:** Iva Lamkum  
**When:** Saturday, 12:10-1:00 a.m.  
**Where:** Party Stage

Iva Lamkum from New Zealand has a voice rich with soul with compassionate lyrics to match. Exposed to jazz, soul and underground hip hop growing up, she describes her personal style as "street soul". She is a dynamic performer, singing, playing piano and drumming in her performances.

**Artist:** Jim Snidero Quartet  
**When:** Saturday, 3:30-4:20 p.m.  
**Where:** Festival Lounge

Commended as an "alto sax virtuoso" by his major feature in Downbeat magazine this year, Jim Snidero is a prominent producer and recording artist. He has an impressively diverse musical repertoire, ranging from string orchestra composition to recording with an organ trio.

**Artist:** Luca Ciarla Quartet  
**When:** Saturday, 3:30-4:20 p.m.  
**Where:** Jazz Cube

Luca Ciarla is an Italian violinist with a personal touch to the strings that has paved an innovative path for contemporary sounds, blending structured compositions with improvisation. His musical tenor surpasses boundaries of genres, blending jazz, classical and folk elements.

**Artist:** Senk Ze  
**When:** Sunday, 1:20-2:10 p.m.  
**Where:** Party Stage

Senk Ze is the first Polish dancehall group to have released an album. The innovative group of six has also invented a new genre called "P-Ragga", a fusion of Caribbean rhythms and P-funk. They describe themselves as a "Panamian Boysband" playing "The Worst Ragga in the City". This sounds like a band you have to see to believe.

**Artist:** The Lighthouse Trio  
**When:** Friday, 2:30-3:20 p.m.  
**Where:** Festival Lounge

Tim Garland, British band-leader, jazz saxophonist and composer, first gained wide acclaim for his contribution in the jazz/folk group Lammas. He is renowned for his imaginative bass clarinet pieces and prolific composition work. He has achieved multiple groups under his name, such as the Dean Street Underground Orchestra and Acoustic Triangle.



# Taking the music on the road

New agency makes touring more accessible for musicians

Story by Richard Loveridge

> September saw the arrival of a new concert booking agency that promises to not only open up new audiences, venues and adventures to musicians, but to simultaneously give people in more marginalized areas of the country the chance to witness and appreciate established and up-and-coming bands.

Bus King, from the organizers of SuperColorSuper, is set to revolutionize live music in Korea. A bit of wordplay on busking, Bus King is Korea's first domestic, intercity booking agency and is dotting the countryside with the footprint and wadded Cass cans of roaming bands.

Seoul has a neighborhood-only music problem. Specifically, almost all shows happen in Hongdae. Beyond that, live shows are few and far between. On top of this problem, the popular venues, as well as the general array of decent live music, have been limited to the confines of Seoul, Busan and occasional shows in satellite cities. Bus King hopes to change that.

The agency will aid bands in formulating a touring schedule that can book up to seven Korean cities for a tour, built on the back of SuperColorSuper's network. Bus King launched in September with two separate tours throughout Korea.



## (((10)))

Improvisational, experimental noise specialists (((10))) return to the stage after a brief hiatus, just in time to celebrate their seventh anniversary. Consisting of husband-and-wife duo Maquido and Itta, (((10))) have built up an impressive and varied discography and touring repertoire.

Their influences, creative Asian luminaries such as film director Shuji Terayama and musician Keiji Haino, say a lot about how much importance they put on infusing the visual, aural and kinetic.

Put succinctly, (((10))) music transcends creative borders. This is evident in their raw, unbounded live presence that sees their sound shift seamlessly from sonic drone to rhythmic, tribal beats.

Itta is not limited to using instruments in the conventional sense; she can often be seen swapping between balloons, toys and a keytar. Paradoxically, Maquido has a very different stage presence in comparison to his partner; he can be found dictating the direction and feel of the show from a static position behind his laptop. It is from here that he layers the room in walls of noise, allowing Itta free reign to interact with, warp and compliment the sounds being created to great effect.

It's this synergy of two very different styles that makes (((10))) so compelling. (((10))) can be seen fronting their 7th Anniversary Tour from Oct. 10 to Oct. 13, in conjunction with Bus King. The tour will stop in four cities across Korea.



(((10))) music transcends all creative borders. This is evident in their raw unbounded live presence that sees their sound shift seamlessly from sonic drone to rhythmic tribal beats.

## (((10))) online

For one of their more representative tracks, see [tinyurl.com/9yswels](http://tinyurl.com/9yswels).  
For more information on the band, go to their website <http://10rgb.bandcamp.com>.

## Bus King

Go to their website at <http://buskingkorea.com> for more information.  
Bands can apply for booking at [buskingkorea@gmail.com](mailto:buskingkorea@gmail.com).



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## The pioneer: HBC Fest

Howlin' Weenie Fest Oct. 26-27

Story by Conor O'Reilly

> The Haebangchon festival, now in its sixth year, put a neighborhood on the map for thousands of expats and Koreans, gave hundreds of performers an audience and began what is now a thriving, raucous scene for expat-made music.

HBC Fest, as it has come to be known, has been a massive success. Performers get their audiences, a huge amount of money is spent at the festival that benefits most businesses in the area, and expats get a place to hear mostly good, and some "interesting," performers.

For HBC Fest, Samuel Beckett's quote rings true: "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." It would be harsh to suggest that HBC Fest has ever failed in its attempt to bring more music to the expat community of Seoul, but it certainly hasn't come without its scrapes. Last year, police questioned if the economic pie was being split fairly (it was) and

it has its fair share of supporters and detractors amongst the local population. Most like it, some hate it.

The background to the festival is a story often told. Two friends, current organizer Lance Reegan-Diehl and former Haebangchon regular Jim Gaynor, had a kind of premonition to put on a music festival at the bars of Haebangchon.

The festival has grown from one that was mostly made of participants from the few open-mic nights operating in Itaewon, and word-of-mouth from the regulars at Orange Tree, Ssen and Phillies. Six years ago it was not easy to fill all the time slots.

Now a simple Facebook announcement begets dozens of requests from performers within hours. They come from all over Korea for one thing: a mic and an audience.





HBC Fest, as it has come to be known, has been a massive success. Performers get their audiences, a huge amount of money is spent at the festival that benefits most business in the area, and expats get a place to hear mostly good, and some "interesting," performers.

That first festival managed to scrape enough acts together to keep people entertained. And while the crowd on the street was nothing compared to later years, it was undoubtedly a memorable enough event to warrant a second festival that December.

Then, just as things were taking off, Gaynor stepped down to take his talents to a new country. Concerned, I asked him who was going to organize the next festival; his response was simple: "you."

Looking back at the first festival I organized in July 2007, I remember only problem after problem. One of them was that too many people were going to the festival. That was an issue because of a general lack of policing and bathrooms. We also had to deal with the insistence of one venue to show a rugby game in the middle of the festival, just before things started to pick up. Our main venue, VFW, struggled to attract enough acts, and I spent a week begging people to do their best to get something together. In the end, we filled time slots with a three-piece acoustic act and a rock band with two guitars and a second-string drummer.

The festival that followed, the Howlin' Weenie in October 2007, was the festival where things clicked from the start. It was set for the Saturday before Halloween. We had more venues and a full complement of bands on board, with many more looking to play. Most importantly, unlike in previous years, everyone we spoke with wanted to play. Word had spread that HBC Fest was the place to be.

I'm still enamored by that festival. It really did have the atmosphere that all the organizers had worked so hard to achieve. On the streets that night, people were decked out in all kinds of costumes (and no clothes at all in some cases), and locals came down onto the street to witness the colors and variety on display. It was a fun time.

It was from this point on that HBC Fest lost much of its organizational frustrations, and it is now clearly the busiest event of the week for the neighborhood. You can certainly attribute much of Haebangchon's current popularity to HBC Fest, not only amongst young expats, but also with business owners who need a big-money weekend to stay afloat.

While last autumn's festival took everyone's breath away, including the few hundred police officers called in to assist with the traffic, a lesson has been learned. As organizers, we have always been concerned with ensuring that we have enough acts to fill the venues; secondly, we need people to fill the bars. But more important is keeping the festival running successfully in the community and ensuring everyone's safety throughout the weekend. That is what's needed so that we can continue to celebrate the rich variety of music and talent that the HBC Fest brings.



**Info:** The HBC Howlin' Weenie Fest takes place in Haebangchon, Seoul, Oct. 26 and 27. The HBC Fest is a free festival brought to you by the businesses of Haebangchon.

**Internet:** Visit [hbcfest.com](http://hbcfest.com) for more details.

- **Medical dermatologic treatment** —  
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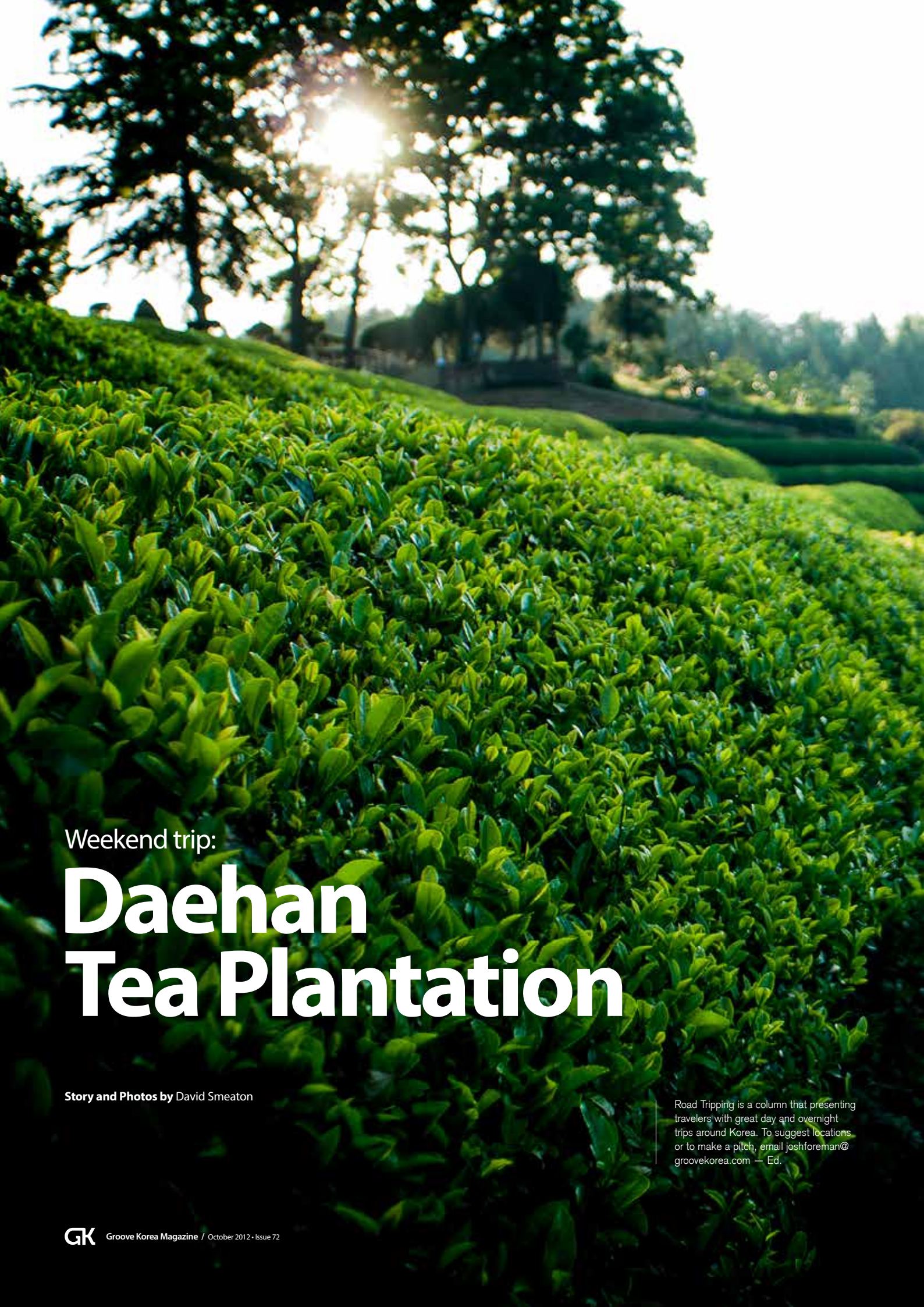


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Weekend trip:

# Daehan Tea Plantation

Story and Photos by David Smeaton

Road Tripping is a column that presenting travelers with great day and overnight trips around Korea. To suggest locations or to make a pitch, email [joshforeman@groovekorea.com](mailto:joshforeman@groovekorea.com) — Ed.





The rows follow the hillside and create beautiful circles and patterns — a serene view as your eyes wander across the rows and lines of green tea.









## Daehan Tea Plantation, South Jeolla Province

➤ Korea's southernmost province is an undiscovered jewel amongst too many foreigners in Korea. Its distance from Seoul keeps it mostly off the tourist radar, but South Jeolla Province is filled with amazing sights and some of Korea's most authentic attractions.

There are some places that would be impossible to leave off a list of "most beautiful places in Korea" — and this is one of them.


It's an easy weekend trip from Seoul. (Now it's accessible by KTX, Korea's high-speed train, for those without a car). After spending the first day temple hunting, I drove to Boseong and found a pension very close to the famous green tea fields — one my wife and I thought was suitable for our baby. The Daehan Tea Plantation is the area that gets the most attention. The hillside tea fields are lush and green. So pretty that they're often used as a setting for advertisements and TV shows.

It was early morning and the mist was starting to clear. The rising sun indicated that we were in for a beautiful day. I was alone — the family still asleep while I sought some of Daehan's famous charm; the light was soft and the tourists hadn't yet arrived. It was a good decision and I found I wasn't the only photographer there. About a dozen people, all with cameras and tripods in tow, had made the trip, too. I hiked up the hill and found an area where the fields circled around on themselves. The green tea is planted in rows and the bushes grow to about 1.5 meters. The rows follow the hillside and create beautiful circles and patterns — a serene view as your eyes wander across the rows and lines of green tea.

At around lunchtime I returned with my family, presenting an opportunity to sample the region's famous foods: green tea ice cream, green tea milkshakes, green tea noodles, green tea bibimbap, green tea pork cutlet — you get the idea.

Of course, there was also plenty of green tea, hot and cold, to drink. My wife got green tea bibimbap. It was hot so I wanted to try one of my favourite dishes naengmyon (cold noodle soup), also with green tea; I was very surprised to discover that the noodles themselves were made with green tea, making them very chewy.

We walked around the fields and ventured further up the hillside to the lookout point. The view was spectacular, surrounded by mountains on all sides, and valleys of green tea plants below. We wandered back down and spent some time taking photos of ourselves with the green tea plants; we weren't alone in this — a lot of young couples were there to take "couple photos" together.

Upon entering the gift shop, an employee handed me some free green tea chocolate. I ate it as I looked around the various teas and foods on offer. They also had beautiful green tea cups (some of which were quite expensive). I had remembered that I should buy some gifts for my coworkers back at school, so I settled on boxes of green tea chocolate and some nice green tea leaves for myself. My wife got some tea for her mother and at the last minute decided to get an extra box of green tea chocolates for ourselves, too. 

**South Jeolla Province is filled with amazing sights and some of Korea's most authentic attractions.**

### Directions by bus

From Seoul Central City Bus Terminal, (Express Bus Terminal Station, Subway Line 3,7,9), take an express bus to Gwangju. From Gwangju Express Bus Terminal, take an intercity bus to Boseong. From Boseong Terminal, take a local bus bound for Yulpo and get off at Daehan Dawon.

Jeollanam-do Boseong-gun Boseong-eup Bongsan-ri 1288-1



# Swim with the sharks

Busan Aquarium lets you take a dive

Story by Allison Dixon

> Imagine your average, run-of-the-mill aquarium. There are fish, sharks and other assorted marine life displayed in a variety of tanks and enclosures. Each creature on display has its own plaque detailing eating, sleeping and other living habits in thorough, if not always interesting, detail. Imagine you are in this aquarium and you are standing in front of the glass wall of a very large tank, where a massive shark swims majestically in front of you. You admire its strength, grace and size.

Now imagine there is no glass wall. There is nothing separating you from that shark and, instead of swimming gracefully in front of you, it is swimming straight at your head.

This is the primary difference between most aquariums and the Busan Aquarium.

Busan Aquarium's shark dive program was initiated when the aquarium opened in 2001 and offers more adventurous visitors the opportunity to don scuba gear and explore the inside of the shark tank. Patrons can get up close and personal with grey nurse sharks, black tip sharks, Queensland giant groupers and stingrays.

All of this, of course, begs the question: How safe can it possibly be to climb into a tank full of sharks?

Michael Jones, an instructor at Busan Aquarium's shark dive program, assures guests that the shark dive program is completely safe. "There are over 600 different species of shark, and three of those are responsible for over 90 percent of attacks on humans," he says. "None of those three species are at the aquarium."


The shark dive program includes an in-water training session before the dive, so even those with no previous scuba experience can sign up. Training focuses on learning how to use scuba gear, general safety information and rules of conduct. The amount of time spent in the shark tank is less than an hour, but it's a half-day activity due to pre-dive paperwork and in-pool scuba training. Also, admission to the aquarium is included, so divers can take some time to check out the rest of the exhibits as well.

While in the shark tank, divers do not wear fins on their feet,

and they are also weighted down to offset the buoyancy of the scuba tank. As a result, the whole experience is less like traditional scuba diving and more like a strange underwater moon walk, in which sharks and other marine life swirl around the divers' heads almost weightlessly.

Underwater cameras and video recorders are available for rent to record the experience. For a more tangible souvenir, Jones encourages divers to scavenge the tank floor for shark teeth, which are always in abundant supply as a shark continually sheds and regrows its teeth throughout its lifetime.

Divers might want to wave to the many tourists and locals gawking at them from the other, drier side of the glass, but Jones suggests caution here. Divers are told to avoid waving their arms around — keeping them at their sides instead — as scuba masks lack peripheral vision and sharks and other fish sometimes swim quite closely around people. A badly timed wave of the arm could result in a rather shocking and unsettling invasion of space for both diver and shark.

That said, Jones assures those interested in signing up for the shark dive not to worry: "In around nine years of diving, I have taken close to 3,000 people through the aquarium — incident free," he says. 

**"There are over 600 different species of shark, and three of those are responsible for over 90 percent of attacks on humans. None of those three species are at the aquarium." — Michael Jones**







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# Korea's finest fireworks

Busan Fireworks Festival Oct. 26 and 27

By Groove Staff / **Photos courtesy** Organizing Committee for Busan Culture & Tourism Festival



► Every year, tens of thousands of people crowd onto Gwangalli Beach to watch an array of colors explode across the sky. It's not only the most spectacular display of fireworks in Korea; it is surely one of the best in all of Asia. Last year, 80,000 fireworks were lit in over 50 minutes — that's 2.7 bursts of color per second. Organizers say 2012's event will be even bigger.

This year's Busan Fireworks Festival falls on Oct. 26 and 27. The first day will feature a K-pop concert at Busan Asiad Main Stadium. Fans of TVXQ, IU, Rissang, Jung In and DJ DOC will want to arrive well before it starts at 7 p.m.

The weekend's main event, the fireworks show, takes place on Oct. 27 at 8 p.m. Again, if you don't want to be staring at the back of someone's head all even-

ing, it would be wise to choose your spot hours in advance.

Organizers are jumping on the Psy bandwagon (who isn't?), describing this year's festival — the 8th since it was founded for the APEC Summit meeting in 2005 — as "Busan Style."

Spectators will get what they asked for: fewer small fireworks and more big ones; the entire show will be brighter, bigger, louder and longer. It will be capped off with "The President" — which will be a phenomenal blast 400 meters in diameter.

The theme is "Fall in Love With Busan," but organizers are also pitching this as the ideal place to propose to your girlfriend.





The 1.4 km-long Gwangalli Beach is famous for its fine sand. Popular activities here include preparing raw fish dishes caught by local fishermen, heading to the nearby Olympic Yacht Rental, water-skiing, jet skiing and windsurfing.

A parade will be held before the fireworks show. Busan citizens and performers from all around the country will march down Gwangalli Beach Rd.

There is no admission fee. The UN Peace Festival will be held on Oct. 25. The Busan Fireworks Festival falls on Oct. 26 and 27.

#### Directions to Gwangalli Beach

From Busan Station, take city bus Nos. 41, 42, 140, 239, 240, 139 and get off at Gwangalli Beach.

#### Directions to Busan

Take a KTX train from Seoul Station (Subway Line Nos. 1, 4). Arrive at Busan Station in 2 hours and 40 minutes. For an adventure take the 5 hour-and-20 minute Mugunghwa train (equipped with a dining car).





# Starbucks Korea opens first drive-thru

Experience the convenience of coffee in your car

Drive-thru coffee, long mainstay for North Americans, has arrived in Korea. Starbucks opened its first drive-thru in Korea in September, opting to roll out the new service in the history-rich city of Gyeongju, North Gyeongsang Province.

Starbucks said the “Gyeongju Bomunro” caters to tourists visiting Gyeongju’s cultural heritage, which was the center of the Silla Dynasty from 57 BC to 935 AD.

Architecturally, the two-story branch is inspired by the Anapji, or Anap Pond, an artificial pond in Gyeongju National Park, as well as the Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory. It incorporates traditional Korean designs of the Bulguksa temple and the Sacred bell of The Great King Seongdeok.

This Starbucks branch takes a more personal ap-

proach than typical drive-thrus: Commuters can place their order by communicating with the barista on a 42-inch flat-screen.

To support the local community, Starbucks donated a portion of its proceeds from tumblers on the opening day to Daejawon, a local organization dedicated to preserving Gyeongju cultural heritage.

The store is located near Bomun Lake and operates from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. year-round. It’s just a 10-minute drive from downtown Gyeongju.

Since 1971, Starbucks has been committed to offering ethically-purchased and responsibly-produced products of the highest quality. Today, with more than 17,000 stores in 55 countries, Starbucks is the premier roaster and retailer of specialty coffee in the world.



## On the Web

For more information on Starbucks, visit [www.istarbucks.co.kr](http://www.istarbucks.co.kr). Starbucks’ mobile homepage is [m.istarbucks.co.kr](http://m.istarbucks.co.kr), [msr.istarbucks.co.kr](http://msr.istarbucks.co.kr).

Find Starbucks on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/StarbucksKorea](http://www.twitter.com/StarbucksKorea)), Facebook ([www.facebook.com/StarbucksKorea](http://www.facebook.com/StarbucksKorea)) and YouTube ([www.youtube.com/StarbucksKorea](http://www.youtube.com/StarbucksKorea)).

## Directions

To visit the store, type this address into your navigation system: North Gyeongsang Province, Gyeongju City, Cheonkeun-dong 1584-33. Call (054) 745-8527 for information.





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RESTAURANT  
REVIEW

# Korean comfort food, elevated

Meokswidonna is cheap, quick and legendary

Story by Mishka Grobler

➤ Hidden in the alleys of Anguk-dong, Meokswidonna doesn't look like anything special. But the walls lining the outside of the restaurant hold thousands of notes scrawled by eager diners waiting to get inside.

Droves of people come to queue outside the 20-year-old eatery. Literally translated "Eat, Rest, Pay, Out," this husband-and-wife-owned hole-in-the-wall attracts crowds for a reason.

While the interior is even less impressive – you could be back inside your school cafeteria – the food is fast, the service friendly, and the table turnover intense. From every kind of "ddeokbokki" – gooey Korean rice cake – imaginable, to noodles and dumplings, Meokswidonna does it all. Every table

is topped with a stewing pot, and like every good Korean eatery, you get to cook your own food while squeezed in next to perfect strangers.

The menu is vast and includes all the good old Korean favorites, but the restaurant is known for its cheese ddeokbokki and ramen noodles. A vital addition to the meal would be their fried yakki dumplings, which are thrown into the pot along with the rest and boiled before your eyes. One of the best things about the place is that the price of the food, which averages about 4,000 won per serving, hardly puts a dent in the wallet.

Expect a lot of food, a lot of spice, and a truly authentic Korean experience. Ramen never tasted this good. 



## Info

Meokswidonna Anguk is the original restaurant of a now 12-shop franchise. Other branches can be found in Apgujeong, Sinchon, Isu, Myeongdong, Konkuk University area, Hanyang University area, Noryangjin, Nowon, Hongdae and Gangnam. To get to Meokswidonna Anguk, walk straight from Anguk Station, Exit 1. Walk about 100 meters, and turn left at the intersection. After another 300 meters, the restaurant is just after Family Mart on the right. | Seoul-si, Jongno-gu, Anguk-dong 17-18 | (02) 723-8089





They are most famous for their lamb, which is grilled at your table on skewers and eaten after being covered in a mix of red pepper and cumin seeds. The seasoning is a secret family recipe.







# On the lamb

An expat brings his region's specialty to Seoul

Story by Gordon West / Photos by Lauren Winchester



➤ Forget the jjajangmyeon. Oh Myeong-hak serves real Chinese food — melt-in-your-mouth pork belly in thick gravy, stir-fried eggplant, bok choy and mushrooms. And of course there's his restaurant's specialty: lamb. Big chunks of it, diced and skewered, ready to be roasted over open coals.

His restaurant, Seong Min Lamb, is named after his nephew. They serve a range of Chinese dishes and a few Korean ones. The hallmark of the dishes is complex, tasty sauces. This is a restaurant where you can walk in, point at any item on the menu, and be impressed.

There are other lamb restaurants in Seoul, but Oh knows how the real stuff should taste. He's from Harbin in China's far north. While growing up there, he spoke a little Korean, and his parents eventually immigrated to Seoul. His first language is Mandarin. He discovered his love of cooking in Japan and supported his studies in management by working part-time at a small Japanese restaurant. When he finally joined his parents in Seoul five years ago, he was fluent in Japanese, but had to start from scratch in Korean. Talk to him today though, and he is fluent in Korean as well.

"It took a lot of adjustment to get used to the language, and to settle down here," he said.

Everything on the menu was created by Oh and his mother. They are most famous for their lamb, which is grilled at your table on skewers and eaten after being covered in a mix of red pepper and cumin seeds. The seasoning is a secret family recipe.

"We looked for what was missing in the neighborhood, then we looked for the best ingredients that we could find," he said. "We made the recipes from there."

Seong Min Lamb is located in a

nondescript building near Seoul National University Station. It's easy to miss, but Korean foodies have been packing the place since it opened three and a half years ago. Go there any night between 6 and 8 p.m. and you will find a line out the door.

In a city full of restaurants where people hate waiting for food, this is the truest testament to their success. They expanded to a larger, second-floor dining room last year.

"They are most famous for their lamb, which is grilled at your table on skewers and eaten after being covered in a mix of red pepper and cumin seeds. The seasoning is a secret family recipe."

Their new space has a small waiting area inside. Before that, it wasn't uncommon to see lines of people waiting outside in any weather.

Oh's success as a restaurateur was anything but assured. He opened Seong Min Lamb when he was 28. Youth may bring innovation, but Oh said that it also brought many challenges. Those paled in comparison to his most difficult challenge — learning Korean.

Since the restaurant opened, Oh has recruited a chef from Shenyang, China, to run the kitchen. Oh can still be found every day prepping food before service, and overseeing operations in the evenings. If you want to catch him in action though, you'd better hurry. A new branch of the restaurant is planned to open in May in the heart of Sillim's entertainment district. He is also collaborating with his chef to open a third restaurant with a menu that reflects some of his favorite Chinese, Japanese and Korean cooking traditions.



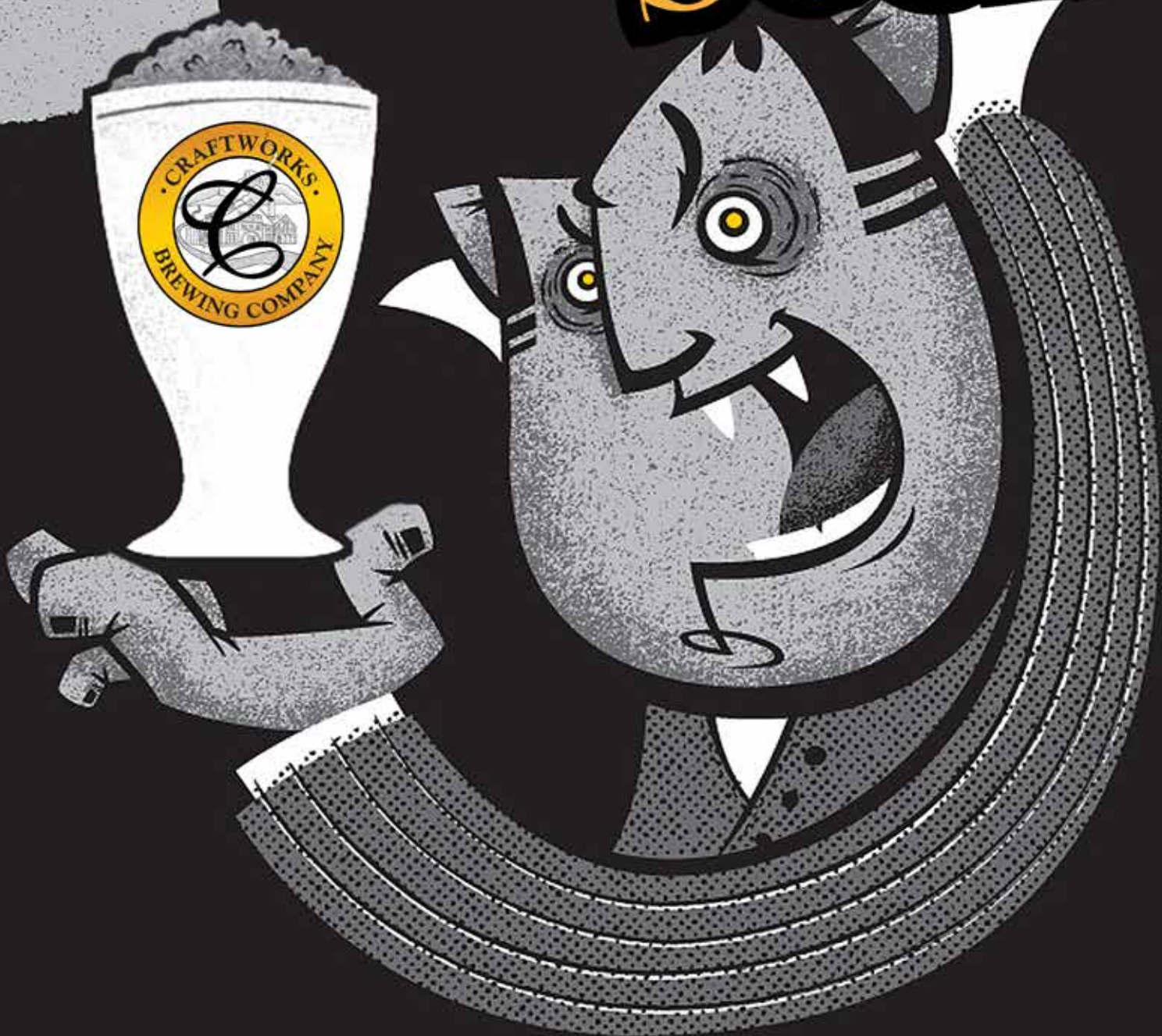
## Info

To get to Seong Min Lamb, go out Exit 2 of Seoul National University Station. Take a left just past the KFC. Walk straight for about five minutes until you see a vertical red sign on the left side of the street with Chinese characters and "yang-go-chi" (양꼬치) written on it in Korean. The front of the restaurant has a scene of sheep grazing in a green field. | 02-8888-665





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# Apples & pork

A natural combination

"Just like the name says, tenderloin is tender and lends itself to sautéing, roasting and frying. It is a cheap option in Korea and a familiar cut we can work with in the kitchen."





By Read Urban / Photo by Elizabeth Papile

Find this and other recipes at [www.groovekorea.com](http://www.groovekorea.com)

> Apples and pork go together like makgeolli and pajeon. Or something like that. All I really know is that apples are in season and street vendors are practically throwing them at us. We should take the hint and start celebrating the beginning of fall by eating them.

Pork has always been the perfect mate to the apple. The most famous example of the marriage, pork chops and applesauce, is a classic, and for good reason. They balance each other out, with the slight tartness and sweetness of the apple cutting through the rich fattiness of the pork. The following recipe is a close cousin to the traditional dish; lean pork loin stands in for the chop. Chutney, a sweet and sour cousin to applesauce, replaces the applesauce.

Pork tenderloin is a recent addition to my list of go-to proteins here in Korea. The tenderloin is the muscle resting close to the spine. It's where we get the beef filet mignon. Just like the name says, it is tender and lends itself to sautéing, roasting and frying. It is a cheap option in Korea and a familiar cut we can work with in the kitchen. The only prep involved is removing the silverskin (tough white connective tissue) with a sharp knife. After that, you are ready to portion it and cook.


The tenderloin you find in Korea is significantly smaller than any you would work with back home, but we can use its size to our advantage. You can sear off the tenderloin and cook it all the way through on the stovetop without worrying about finishing it off in the oven. I cook my pork medium well, but that is just a personal preference. I am not going to twist anyone's arm here, so cook the dish to your comfort level.

## Pork with Apple Chutney

- 2 apples, peeled and chopped (about 4 cups)
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 1 red chili, sliced thin
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 knob ginger, rinsed and sliced lengthwise
- 1 small stick cinnamon
- 5 tbsp. apple vinegar
- 4 tbsp. brown sugar
- ½ cup water
- 1 tbsp. ground coriander (optional)
- 2 tbsp. butter
- Pork tenderloin, trimmed and at room temperature
- 1-2 tbsp. vegetable oil

## Instructions

Sauté the onion and pepper in the butter until soft. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for one minute. Add the rest of the ingredients and stir to combine. Let the mixture come to a simmer and cook until the liquid has reduced and the chutney becomes thick. Remove the ginger and cinnamon and let the chutney cool.

Heat a sauté pan over medium high heat with a tablespoon of vegetable. Rub the pork with the remaining oil and season liberally with salt and pepper. When the pan is hot, place the pork in the center and let it cook, undisturbed, for one to two minutes. Rotate the pork in the pan, searing each side for the same amount of time. Turn the heat down low and continue to cook the pork, turning occasionally. Depending on the size it will take another two to three minutes on each side. Remove the tenderloin from the pan and let it rest on a cutting board for at least five minutes. Slice and serve with the apple chutney. 

**About the author:** Read Urban, a Virginia native, spent years cooking in the United States before coming to Korea. He enjoys experimenting with Korean ingredients, eating at innovative restaurants in Seoul and creating favorites from home.



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# High-class food, fast

Versatile and easy tuna pâté

I served it  
as a tapas: on a  
small piece of toast with  
mayonnaise and smoked  
salmon.





By Paloma Julian

Find this and other recipes at [www.groovekorea.com](http://www.groovekorea.com)

> On my way back to Korea after an amazing summer, I decided to read a little on the plane. In one article the writer was talking about the old software boom and how entrepreneurs would raise money for their projects. They used to rely on "the three Fs" — family, friends and fools. Because I am not very into economics I stopped reading the article, but the three Fs stuck in my head.

As an expat, I live my life missing the three Fs, but I'm referring to family, friends and food.

After having lived many years away from home, I can say at this point that it doesn't get easier to be away from those three pillars. You constantly have to choose between your homeland and the land you've chosen to live in, your native food and the food where you're living.

There is a choice that I don't allow myself to make, though, and that's the one between fast and slow food. Korean or Spanish, I want to eat good food — good tasting and good quality. That almost always means eating slow food — food prepared from fresh, whole ingredients in traditional ways.

This isn't always easy. At home a few weeks ago I was faced with a challenge: cooking dinner for my entire family on my birthday. I won't say I wasn't tempted to take the fast-food route. I ended up finding a recipe that met the slow food criteria but didn't take long to make. In fact, it only took 20 minutes, and I can honestly say my family was impressed.

First of all, I thought of ingredients that I always have in my kitchen; ingredients that are so versatile that they're a must in every kitchen.

One of them is canned tuna. It's easy to cook, and most people like it. Without further ado, here's a recipe for tuna pâté with only five ingredients. You can make it in the same amount of time that it'll take you to watch an episode of "Big Bang Theory."

## Tuna Pâté

- 3 80-gram cans of tuna
- 3 tbsp. mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp. tomato sauce or ketchup
- 3 eggs
- 8 sticks of surimi-crab meat sticks (the ones you can find in every supermarket)
- Pinch of salt and pepper

## Instructions

Mix all the ingredients in a food processor until they reach a creamy texture. Pour them into a greased mold (I recommend the silicon ones). Put the mold in the microwave on max power for seven minutes. Once it's done, leave it in the microwave, undisturbed, for five more minutes.

And voilà, you have tuna pâté. The texture should be between a mousse and a traditional pâté. You can eat it cold, or just after you take out it from the microwave.

I served it as a tapas: on a small piece of toast with mayonnaise and smoked salmon. Enjoy! 🍷

**About the author:** Paloma Julian is Spanish to the core, although she hasn't lived there in years. A woman of many talents, she enjoys bringing the nuances of Spanish food culture to Seoul's English-speaking community.

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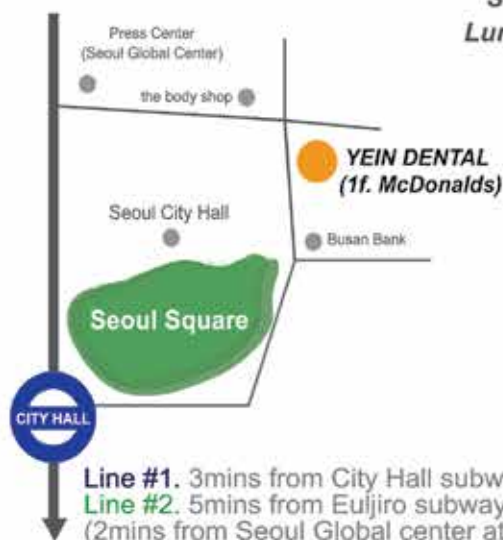
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# The walking undead

Zombies take over Seoul, again

Story by Ara Cho / Photos by Taylor Sloane

> It's an eerily quiet October evening. The moon casts a long shadow as you scuffle by a dark alley. You adjust your coat as the chill of the night seeps through. All of a sudden, on the other side of the narrow path, you notice a silhouette of a disheveled person in ragged clothes, walking toward you in an unsteady, uneven gait.

At first you think it's a drunken ajeossi. As you get closer, the shadowy outline reveals a blood-thirsty, flesh-eating monster, moaning "Brains!" as it slumps forward with shaky arms of purple rotten flesh.

Has the zombie apocalypse become a reality? Are bath salts finally being circulated in Korea? Sadly no, but it is the next best thing: the Third Annual Seoul Zombie Walk.

Two years ago, Philippe Teston, Mia Pak, Kevin Seabolt and Todd Williams mashed their brains together with the mission to recreate in Korea the age-old tradition of Halloween haunted fun and to share with Koreans what they miss most from their childhood and their hometowns stateside. The Seoul Annual Zombie Walk was born. They drew an impressive 100 or so zombies the first year simply through word of mouth and Facebook outreach, and the number nearly doubled the following year.

The zombies "come from all walks of life — pun intended," says Teston. Many zombie-loving Koreans and expats alike have come out to celebrate life, or lack thereof, by partaking in this shriek-inspiring

stroll. They are aged mostly between 20 and 40, though some gore-donning children and seniors have been spotted staggering along the way. The organizers last year also saw a lot of returnees from the first year and expect to see more of them come for what is expected to be another successful zombie crawl this year, slated for Oct. 27.

The evening doesn't start with a mutated strain of virus outbreak like in the movies. Instead zombies assemble either in plain dress or come fully prepared to the rendezvous point in Seoul Forest. In this dark, evil forest — actually, in a well-lit area near the sculpture and skate park — people begin to gather at 6 p.m. to mingle and become undead. The brain-hungry cohort will

then leave the park at around 8 p.m. toward Ttukseom Station, Line 2, headed for Hongdae.

Since the group is expected to be slow in pace and large in number, they will be occupying several different trains and stations for a prolonged period of time, much to the screaming pleasure of terrified children and camera-happy Seoulites on the streets and in the subway cars.

"Walkers are often asked to pose for pictures with passersby," says Pak, pointing out the perks of riding the subway and venturing through the streets.

Teston chimes in: "If I had a 1,000 won for every photo that was taken of me last year, I'd probably have 200 bucks! Not bad for just stand-





### Need a costume?

For those who want to join in on the gore-splashing fun this October, Pak says costume shops open up around Seoul closer to Halloween, and there are several professional costume makeup shops around the city. For example, at [www.viseart.co.kr](http://www.viseart.co.kr) and [www.probunjang.com](http://www.probunjang.com), one can find the necessary tools to transform oneself into formidable moving corpses.

### Charity

The Annual Zombie Walk is even opening the event up to charity in collaboration with Little Travellers-Korea, an organization which will sell Little Traveller zombie doll pins during the walk and the after-party. All proceeds will be used toward fighting against HIV/AIDS in the KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa. More information can be found on the charity group's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/little.t.korea](http://www.facebook.com/little.t.korea).

ing on the sidewalk."

The public reaction to the zombie attack ranges from amusement to sheer terror. "Some initial reactions are confusion, amusement and 'I don't know what this is but I better take a picture of it.' Some are initially scared but most realize that it's a fun and amusing event," Pak says.

Teston adds, "I think one of my favorite moments was scaring a Korean guy and his girlfriend. The girl wasn't scared at all, but the guy ... Well, let's just say he used his girlfriend as a human shield."

The zombies almost had a run-in with law enforcement the first year, the organizers said, when a disapproving elderly Korean man called the police as the undead were waiting for the train. The policeman with

a good sense realized that they weren't up to any misdeed and let them on their way.

"Everyone's safety is our primary concern. The walk route has very limited exposure to traffic. We make announcements before the walk asking everyone to refrain from actually touching anyone and to comply with whatever law enforcement says if any should approach us," says Pak, emphasizing that they focus on more than just entertainment when planning the event.


Once the zombies arrive in Hongdae, where they are met with higher enthusiasm and more excited crowds, other zombies who couldn't make the trip out to the forest join them. Last year they staged impromptu performances of

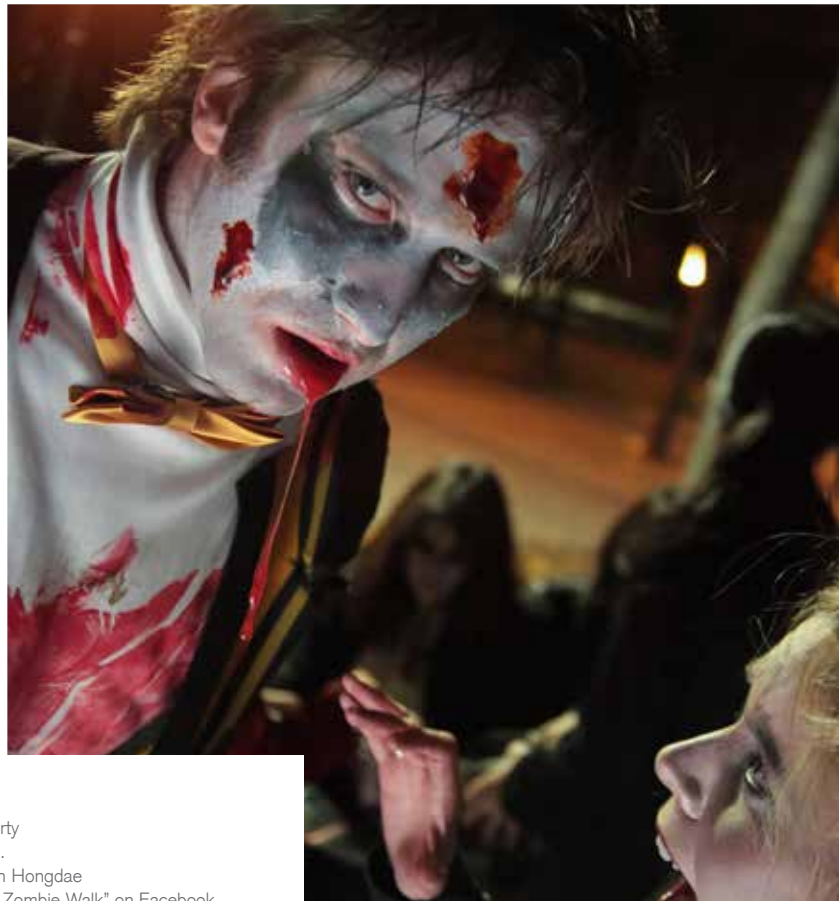
"Thriller" with someone's portable radio. Perhaps this year there will be a swashing and staggering equestrian dance performance of "Gangnam Style," the zombie version. One can only hope.

Last year, the zombie walk was followed by a party at club Freebird in Hongdae, where every flesh-eating zombie received a free drink with admission. "We had several bands dress up and play zombie-themed songs for us," says Pak. "We are currently working out the details of this year's after-party."

Contrary to the long line of zombie flicks in the West, in Korea there is just one zombie film — "Neighbor Zombie" in English — which is surprising as Teston attests to its popularity in Korea when asked

if zombie culture was well known here: "I don't know a single Korean kid (who) doesn't know what a zombie is."

"A good zombie walk needs people (who) are genuinely interested in zombies," says Teston. "It's a good thing that lots of people in Korea love zombies. And it also needs a good reaction from the public. We've been really lucky with that last part — with all the stress that Korean society puts on people, it's nice to have an event like this where people can unwind and have a little fun, and I think that's the big attraction." 



#### More info

3rd Annual Zombie Walk and after-party

When: Saturday, Oct. 27, from 6 p.m.

Where: Starts in Seoul Forest, ends in Hongdae

For details, search "3rd Annual Seoul Zombie Walk" on Facebook







# No more excuses

Get in shape with British Army Fitness in Korea

Story by Ara Cho / Photos by James Little

➤ Every Saturday morning a group of some 10 expats dressed in gym attire gather under a gazebo in front of Namsan Park. They exchange greetings and are soon joined by Ian Matthews, a British personal trainer and health expert, who runs British Army Fitness in Korea (Bafik), a fitness training boot camp in Seoul that's quickly gaining in popularity.

Matthews, a former U.K. army officer, brings his decades of experience in Ireland to the boot camp designed not only for weight loss, but also to restore cardiovascular health and overall fitness.

His impressive résumé is not limited to personal trainer to several Irish celebrities and sports stars, including the 2010 winner of Miss Ireland Figure Sculptor. He also runs workshops and gives lectures on health, well-being and personal development for a radio show and corporate organizations worldwide. More recently in Korea, Matthews was invited by the Hyatt, JP-Morgan and Kim & Chang, a top law firm in Korea, to conduct wellness workshops for its employees.

He also recently launched a new executive training course dubbed the OPTIMUM, which is a new leadership program for executives and companies in Korea to "produce resilient, mentally and physically, strong leaders."

The youthful-looking 49-year-old's boot camp attendees are from all walks of life: business leaders, English teachers, radio presenters, engineers and students. And the boot camp is designed to meet the optimal fitness goals of each individual, from teens to 60-somethings and athletes to couch potatoes.

Perhaps it's a testament to its effectiveness how fast the program has grown. Matthews moved to his wife's homeland just over a year ago. In fact, the boot camp in Seoul was a request by one of Matthews' former clients in New York who is now living in Seoul.

What started out as low-profile, neighborly workout sessions of four members grew with word of mouth and has now reached 80 attendees.

To see what the buzz is about over this fitness program, Groove Korea ran alongside the boot camp one Saturday morning to find out more.

Running at the front of the pack is Adrian, a 29-year-old Australian, who has been attending the Bafik boot camp for months. He likes that it helps in building core strength, and working out in a group setting motivates him to push harder.

Closely behind was Graeme, a Kiwi trade commissioner, who has been in Korea for three and a half years. He started Bafik in January when the park was still covered in snow. His two tall teenage sons, Jared and Troy, join him. He loves that Bafik helps reduce stress and is well-rounded circuit training with different routines every time.

As Graeme pointed out, Bafik's circuit training features a different, military-style routine that helps to utilize all the hidden muscle groups not used often in daily life.

The Bafik members now gather around in a circle in an open space, their shoulders heaving up and down from the brisk-paced jog from the meeting point.

Moving into the second phase of his workout plan, Matthews starts them on high-intensity exercises with funky names like "Roper-dopers," "Wack-jacks," "Bastard rifle drills," "Sumo squats" and more.

Matthews mixes up the exercise routines every session in order to keep them on their toes and to work different sets of muscles.

Attendees start to turn a different shade of pink and their breathing becomes more intense. Matthews observes each with watchful eyes as he encourages them along: "Challenge yourselves, lads," "Show me some Iron-man stuff," and "You're gonna have a good weekend after this." All the while he notes the energy level of the group and adjusts the routine to help them push to their personal limits.

Trucking forward earnestly, sweat dripping off his forehead is Trevor from the U.K., who is a newcomer to Korea. He likes Bafik for the discipline and motivation it provides, along with the fact that he's made friends here.

Matthews' welcoming and easy-going nature helps many newcomers fit in for the intense hour-long workout. It

**What started out as low-profile, neighborly workout sessions of four members grew with word of mouth and has now reached 80 attendees.**

can be intimidating to some at first, especially for those who haven't hit the gym since they touched down in Incheon. But Matthews understands that and offers advice on how to stay healthy in Korea, where balancing work, play and fitness is not an easy task.

And then there's Graham from Australia, who is in his 50s. His 11-year-old son is another regular

attendee. Graham likes the boot camp for, among other things, the fresh air he can breathe in, instead of the musky indoor air of the gym. He also noted that Matthews is particularly good at gauging everyone's fitness level and the condition of the day to tailor the work-out routine.

Matthews is a firm believer in allowing the body to repair after the workout for better long-term results. After the intense exercise routines, Matthews has the group focus their attention on breathing, stretching and feeding their tired muscles.

Everyone is drenched in sweat and perches down while stretching their legs. They look exhausted, but also relaxed and satisfied. 🏋️

## Details

British Army Fitness in Korea offers weekday evening sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays and two morning sessions on Saturdays at Namsan Park in Itaewon.

There is no contractual obligation and each session costs between 8,000 won and 15,000 won.

## Online

For more information, visit [bafikbootcamps.com](http://bafikbootcamps.com)

## Exercise times

Mondays at 7:30 p.m. (Bootcamp)  
Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (Bootcamp)  
Thursdays at 7 p.m. Hash House Harriers (run)  
Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. (Bootcamp)  
Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. (Outdoor Muay Thai)

Each session is 45 minutes including warm-up/stretch-down.







# Meet the kettlebell

Functional, full-body movement radiates power from big muscles

**Story by** Khaled Allen  
**Photos by** Anna Pusack  
 Body & Seoul Martial Arts & Fitness Center

> The simple kettlebell is little more than an iron ball with a handle. Perhaps you've seen one at your local gym. It may not look like much, but don't let its simplicity fool you; start swinging one around and you'll discover how effective they can be in creating a great workout. Why has this harmless-looking weight made such an impact on all forms of fitness training throughout the world?

## A unique shape for a unique workout

There are three parts of a kettlebell. The ball is the weight itself, the handle is the top of the loop where you grip it and the horns are the sides of the handle.

Because of their shape, kettlebells lend themselves to dynamic workouts better than a dumbbell. A kettlebell can of course be used for regular strength training like slow, grinding sets of shoulder presses. Where they really shine, however, is in more dynamic conditioning circuits where you transition from one movement to another quickly with minimal rest.

Because the weight is not evenly distributed like a dumbbell, using a kettlebell develops a strong grip and a stable, adaptable trunk. Because most kettlebell movements are dynamic rather than static or supported on a bench, your postural muscles work hard to transfer power from hips to weight. Additionally, many kettlebell movements involve twists or only work one side of the body at a time, working your obliques and deep stabilizer muscles.

## The holy grail of human movement

In contrast to the isolation exercises commonly used with dumbbells, most kettlebell training emphasizes functional, full-body movements that radiate power from the big muscles at the center of your body towards your extremities.

The core movement of kettlebell training is hip extension (going from a hips-back position to standing), powered by the large muscles of your butt, the glutes. Located at the center of your body, they control the large hip joint. These muscles are uniquely prominent in humans; they are what enable us to walk and stand upright, run efficiently, and sprint powerfully. Almost by default, a person with active glutes and strong hip extension is visibly fit and strong in a way that is applicable to real life. Unfortunately, time spent sitting leads them to deactivate, and weaker muscles then take over when we lift weights or run, which leads to injuries or chronic back pain.

If you want to be healthy, fast or strong, learn to use your glutes. If you want to lose weight, the glutes, as the biggest muscle group in the body, will burn more calories faster than any other.

The move that made kettlebells famous, and the one that lays the foundation for all other kettlebell movements, is the swing, which is the purest form of hip extension.

## The kettlebell swing

This is a relatively simple movement that a lot of people do wrong. Done correctly, it trains you to maintain a stable posture while driving a lot of power through the hips, which is the most essential human movement pattern, used in walking, running, jumping and lifting weights.

### Set-up

1. Stand with feet shoulder width apart facing a kettlebell.
2. Bend at the hips, pushing them back as far as possible. Arch your back and try to tilt the front of your pelvis down while sticking your chest up and forward. Looking forward will help keep your chest up.
3. Now reach for the kettlebell, grasp it by the handle, and pull your shoulder blades down your back.

### The swing

1. Take a deep breath, hold it and compress by contracting your abs.
2. Pull the kettlebell back between your legs like hiking a football.
3. Squeeze your glutes and drive your hips forward. This causes you to stand tall. The momentum of driving your hips forward will propel the kettlebell up. Exhale in a controlled hiss; you want to stay tight.
4. Without lifting with the arms, let the weight swing up to chest level.
5. At the top of the movement, you should be standing tall, not leaning back or arching your spine. Contract your abs like you're about to get punched in the gut and squeeze your glutes like you're pinching a coin between your cheeks.
6. Let the kettlebell fall on its own between your legs. Inhale.
7. Push your hips back like you're sitting in a chair while keeping your chest up until the kettlebell is as far back as possible. Then squeeze your glutes and do another rep.

Aim to do 5 sets of 20 perfect swings at a given weight before moving up.



## Ed

Khaled Allen is a fitness and health consultant for Body & Seoul Martial Arts & Fitness Center. For more of his writings, go to [www.khaledallen.com](http://www.khaledallen.com). — Ed.



# GIVE ULSAN A CHANCE

## Capturing **Korea**

Everyone loves beautiful pictures. Groove Korea is teaming up with the Seoul Photo Club to give readers tips on where to get the best snaps on the peninsula. Our photographers will share tips on how and where they shoot. To compete in the Photo Challenge and win great prizes from Groove Korea, head on over to the Seoul Photo Club on Flickr:

[flickr.com/groups/seoulphotoclub](https://www.flickr.com/groups/seoulphotoclub)

Photos by Jason Taele





This is what I see when I think of  
Ulsan — the Taehwa River Grand  
Park. F/4.0 ISO 100 bracketed  
-2/0/+2





The standard perception of Ulsan  
— industry with dwellings in the  
background. Taken on one of the  
few vantage points in the Onsan  
Petrochemical Complex. F/11 ISO 100  
Bracketed -2/0/+2.







Apartments fit for Dr. Evil. This is what new Ulsan is turning into. Massive apartment complexes popping up everyday. F/8 ISO 320 Bracketed -2/0/+2











Sinbok Rotary — taken from the top of  
the building I was married in. ISO100 F4.0  
Bracketed -2/0/+2







# Give Ulsan a chance

There's a lot more to this city than petrochemical plants and factories

**Interview by** Dylan Goldby

➤ Give us a little insight into the photographer and the man that is Jason Teale.

I have been here since 2003. I have always been a teacher here, but the photographer in me has grown with the people that I've been hanging around with. I was trained as a film photographer before coming to Korea, but the true passion really started to form once I arrived.

I have been trying to improve my skills and learn as much as I can. I feel as a person and a photographer, I have grown a lot. Photography has allowed me to see the beauty in a city that is commonly known as a boring place to live.

**Have you always been in Ulsan since arriving in Korea? How would you describe it?**

Years ago, it was tough to live in Ulsan. It just wasn't a very exciting place to live, but I feel that has changed greatly. Every year Ulsan seems to give itself a facelift, and it is always getting better. With new parks and bike paths across the city, it is becoming a better place to live. This is also attracting a lot more businesses, especially ones that cater to the needs of foreigners. The Ulsan of today is nothing like it was when I first came. There are tons of great places to eat and see.

**You work a lot in HDRi, and produce some hyper-realistic views of your city. Why HDRi?**

When I first started using HDRi, I was pleased with the results and loved the detail that came out. I felt that by bracketing the exposures I could somehow keep the detail and the light in control.

When I started shooting the city from above, I realized that HDRi was the perfect tool to show all of the elements that make up the views that I was seeing. The color and details were all there, I just brought them to the surface a bit more.

As I learned more about the technique, I found that cityscapes were the perfect match for HDRi, and the colors of Ulsan really popped. I know that some do not like HDRi, but for what I am using it for, I feel that it is a good match.

**What are the big three things to photograph in Ulsan, and why?**

The first would have to be the industrial area in Ulsan ... most people think that is all Ulsan is. However, there

is more to the city than just the industry. With that said, at night the petro-chemical factories look really cool and I think that draws a lot of people out there.

The second place I would suggest would be Taehwa River Grand Park. The city has invested a lot of money into making this area beautiful, and I feel that they have achieved it. There is a lot of ground to cover, but the shining star is the futuristic looking walking bridge. The design with the large circle makes it a real eye-catcher and there is no shortage of photos of it.

The third would be Daewangam Park in Bangeojin. This park is nice and situated close to the Hyundai shipyards. The small bridge out to the rocky little islands is beautiful, especially at first light.

**"Photography has allowed me to see the beauty in a city that is commonly known as a boring place to live." — Jason Teale**

**Any hints and tips for those visiting Ulsan with a camera in hand?**

The biggest thing is to find transportation. Ulsan is spread out and all of the areas that I have mentioned are located a good distance from each other. A scooter or motorcycle is probably your best bet to get around Ulsan. There are also a few good locations that are just outside of Ulsan that are easily reached — if you have transportation.

If you are looking to go roof-topping, look for buildings that are older. They are the ones that will not have the coded entry systems and will allow you to get to the roof. Many of the high-rise apartments look tempting but are difficult to get up to.

Lastly, give Ulsan a chance. There is a lot of beauty here and a lot of hidden treasures to shoot. I have been here almost 10 years now and I am still finding interesting places to shoot. 📷







# Photo Challenge

This month's challenge: Sun



**Winner: Douglas MacDonald**

Shot in: Samyang Beach, Jeju Island | Aperture: f8  
Shutter: 1/250 second | ISO: 100 | Focal length: 200mm

Compete in the Photo Challenge for a chance to win a 50,000 won voucher from Kasan Camera. Go to the Seoul Photo Club's website for more information.

[www.flickr.com/groups/seoulphotoclub](http://www.flickr.com/groups/seoulphotoclub)



# Horoscopes

October 2012



## Aries

Let someone close to you know exactly how you feel about him or her, especially if praise is deserved. Maybe things won't work out — but they certainly won't if you keep quiet. Expect proper conduct out of your subordinates and you will get it. A financial opportunity could wither away if you hesitate too long.



## Libra

Maintaining the status quo may not solve your problems. You may be called upon to exhibit some independent thinking and some very positive action if you are to come out on top. In romantic affairs, keep things light and don't go overboard with promises. Be extremely cautious when dealing with complicated machinery.



## Taurus

Excitement and, very probably, romance could well be the result — but only if you let things move at their own pace. Now might be a good time to begin a serious savings plan. If you wait until all your debts are paid before you begin, you will probably never save anything — and you'll probably never be out of debt if you don't.



## Scorpio

Write that letter you have been mentally composing for the last few months. If what you feel is real, you would be quite foolish to stand on ceremony. In office matters, make sure you keep your tongue from flapping concerning affairs that should remain private. A slip of the lip could sink more than a ship.



## Gemini

A serious and quite disturbing love affair could begin for you now if you respond to the stimulus being waved in front of you. If you are free and unattached, it might well be worth riding the whirlwind — because that is what it is likely to be. If already committed, make sure that this is what you really want.



## Sagittarius

Romance blossoms in the strangest places, according to the poet, and you could find this out to your utter amazement — and delight. Business problems may seem less if you take time to walk around to the other side so you can gain perspective. The same could be true for a personal matter that has been plaguing you.



## Cancer

Getting to the bottom of a mystery may not be as pleasant for you as you think. Sometimes it is best to let sleeping dogs lie. In dealing with fellow workers on an important business deal, don't allow others to speak for you, especially when the responsibility is yours alone. Failing to do so could damage your reputation.



## Capricorn

Make sure that an old debt is paid in full before you go to the well once again. You might also do some serious thinking about your real desires and what it is you want to do with your life. If what you are presently doing is not making you happy — or at least contented — then why are you doing it? Take the advice of a friend seriously.



## Leo

An upturn in your personal finances is definitely due and could come from a surprising source. Your best bet is to be totally honest and to hide nothing from those who may have a similar interest. If you lose, you won't have lost your honor — and if you win, you win really big and there will be no carpers.



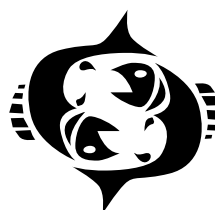
## Aquarius

Estimate your personal worth, as well as financial, and see if you are able to make things balance. If you are found wanting, do something about becoming solvent once again. You would be well advised to seek medical advice about a serious problem. Office politics are definitely not your game and you should avoid playing it.



## Virgo

You could gain an important and influential friend simply by speaking your mind and not allowing others to run roughshod over you or someone close to you. Spend a little time with a youngster or an old person who is close to you, even if it means making some personal sacrifices. Shared moments are important to those who love you.



## Pisces

Problems of a financial nature are not as insurmountable as they seem. Seek good advice and then weigh it carefully before striking out on your own. Do not allow others to influence your convictions on moral issues simply because it would make things neater and easier. The thing that is hardest to do is generally the thing you should do.



COMICS

DEAR KOREA

060

Dear Korea PRESENTS

**OBLIGATORY KOREAN POSES!**

(Part 1)

With helpful annotations!

This one is the all-time favorite.

The closer to the face, the better.

**The Peace Sign**

Using both hands is acceptable.

The ideal pose should be void of actual emotions.

**The Surprise**

Fist-to-cheek contact is an absolute must.

I have no idea what I'm doing.

**The 뿌잉 뿌잉..?**

[HTTP://DEARKOREACOMIC.COM](http://dearkoreacomix.com)

READY FOR THE CAMERA, JEN LEE



Copyright Larry Rodney/Neil Garscadden 2012 (www.charismandad.com)

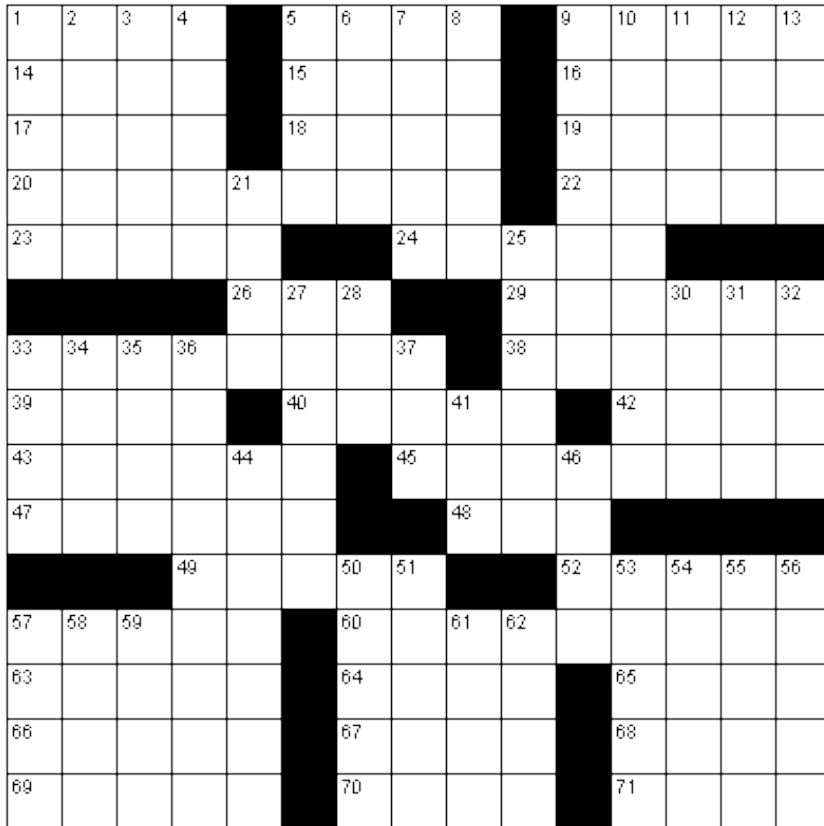


By Lee Scott / See more of his work at: www.thethreewisemonkeys.com





## CROSSWORD



### Across

1. Goddess of discord (Greek mythology)
5. A diving duck
9. Glue
14. Dreadful
15. Technician (abbrev.)
16. Not inner
17. Style or grace
18. Against
19. Celebrities
20. Relating to female monthly discharges
22. 1000 kilograms
23. Farewell

24. Locate and correct programming errors
26. Gist
29. Reach a destination
33. Generic Valium
38. Weighted down with weariness
39. Cancel or reverse an action
40. Casing
42. Appealed earnestly
43. Extremely few in number
45. Instructors
47. Pharynx
48. Bother

49. Analyze chemically
52. Publish a magazine
57. Smooth and shiny
60. Making amorous advances
63. Heart artery
64. Supplements with difficulty
65. Initial wager
66. Armada
67. Tongue of a wagon
68. Raised platform
69. Plant life
70. Increases or sums
71. Fine earth floating in rivers

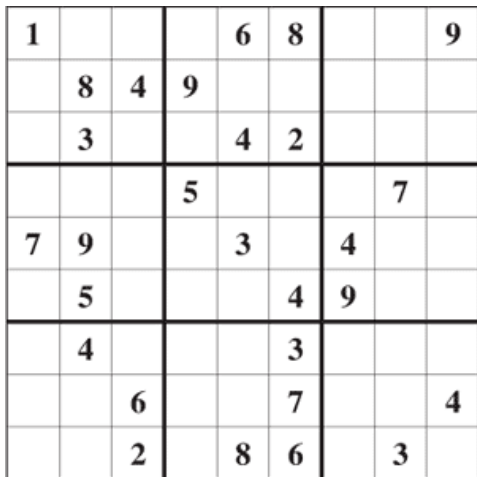
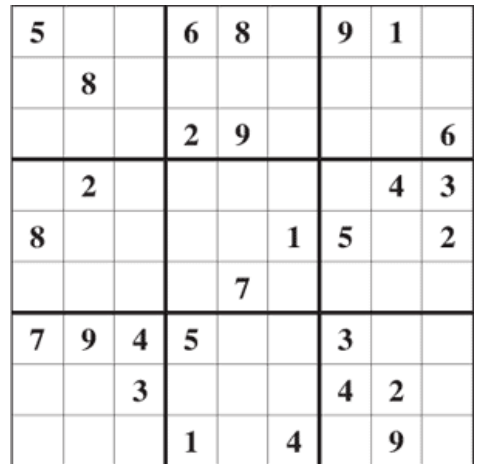
### Down

1. Swelling under the skin
2. Annoyed
3. Pertaining to modern day Persia
4. Feel
5. A sun
6. List of choices
7. Outward
8. An indeterminate length of time
9. Bearing
10. Signature
11. Anagram of "Ants"
12. A small slender gull
13. Gaelic

21. Melody
25. A narrative song
27. Emotionally disturbs
28. "\_\_\_ humbug!"
30. Inactive
31. Swerve
32. Finishes
33. Anagram of "Stud"
34. 1/12th of a foot
35. Hebrew month
36. A Persian prophet (628-551 BC)
37. Encountered
41. Meadow
44. A Sicilian sponge cake

46. Metal money
50. Sporting venue
51. Harnessed
53. A large amount
54. A desert in northeastern Egypt
55. Up to a time
56. Eliminate from the body
57. An iron hook with a handle
58. Hang laxly
59. Chocolate cookie
61. Brew of fermented honey
62. Vipers

## SUDOKU



### How to play

Sudoku requires no calculation or arithmetic skills. It is essentially a game of placing numbers in squares, using very simple rules of logic and deduction.

### Objective

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow. In a 9 by 9 square Sudoku game:

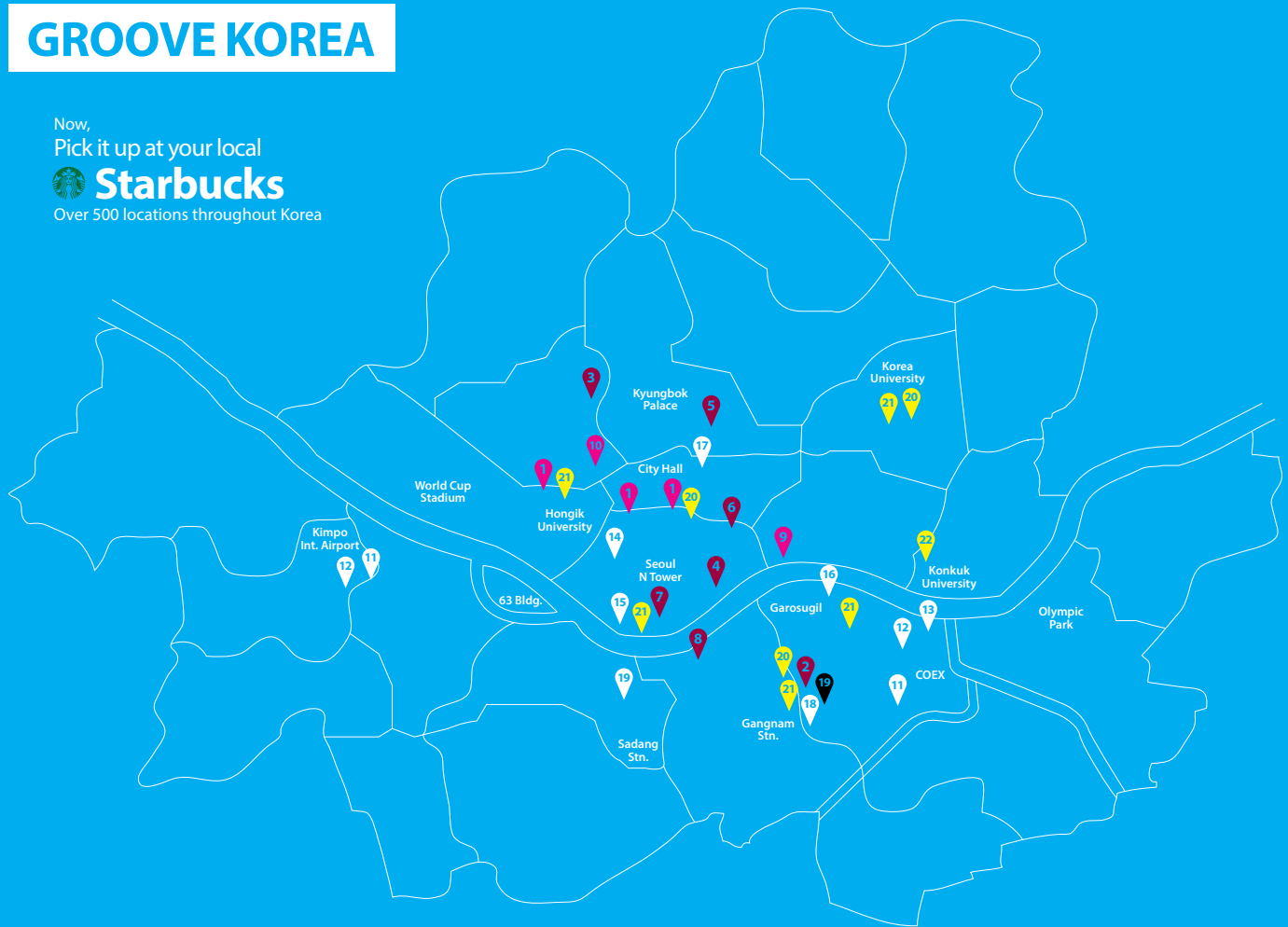
- Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.



# WHERE TO PICK UP

## GROOVE KOREA

Now,  
Pick it up at your local  
 **Starbucks**  
Over 500 locations throughout Korea



- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p><b>1 NANTA</b><br/>Korea's best non-verbal performance.</p> | <p><b>7 GRAND HYATT SEOUL</b><br/>Namsan area</p>  | <p><b>13 LEE MOON WON CLINIC</b><br/>Specialist in hair loss treatment<br/>02-511-1079</p>                           | <p><b>18 NOVA SKIN CLINIC</b><br/>Korea's leading skin care and hair loss specialists<br/>02-563-7977</p>              |
| <p><b>2 NOVOTEL AMBASSADOR</b><br/>Gangnam area</p>            | <p><b>8 JW MARRIOTT</b><br/>Gangnam area</p>   | <p><b>14 ESARANG DENTAL</b><br/>Internationally trained staff and state of the art techniques<br/>02-701-2199</p>    | <p><b>19 BIG ROCK</b><br/>Premium craft beers from Alberta Canada<br/>02-539-6650</p>                                  |
| <p><b>3 GRAND HILTON SEOUL</b><br/>Shincheon area</p>          | <p><b>9 LANCE&amp;J PT/FITNESS</b><br/>Professional and customized fitness programs and squash<br/>02-796-6560</p> | <p><b>15 UPENNIVY DENTAL</b><br/>TRICARE member. English speaking dentist.<br/>02-797-7784</p>                       | <p><b>20 CPK (California Pizza Kitchen)</b><br/>The legendary pizza from Beverly Hills California<br/>02-3479-9000</p> |
| <p><b>4 IP BOUTIQUE HOTEL</b><br/>Itaewon area</p>             | <p><b>10 LUCY HAIR</b><br/>Hair consultant trained in UK<br/>02-325-2225</p>                                       | <p><b>16 SMART DENTAL</b><br/>Smart dental promise gentle, comfort, precise, and clean dentistry<br/>02-517-6278</p> | <p><b>21 DOSTACOS</b><br/>Simply the best Mexican restaurant in Korea<br/>02-593-5904</p>                              |
| <p><b>5 SOMERSET PALACE</b><br/>Kyungbok palace area</p>       | <p><b>11 MIZMEDI HOSPITAL</b><br/>World class health care for women</p>  | <p><b>17 YEIN DENTAL</b><br/>One-stop dental care with the best location at the City Hall.<br/>02-756-2828</p>       | <p><b>22 CAFE 4B/MONOMO</b><br/>International café and Japanese Ramen restaurant</p>                                   |
| <p><b>6 ASTORIA HOTEL</b><br/>Myungdong area</p>               | <p><b>12 WOORIDUL HOSPITAL</b><br/>World top quality center for neuro-musculoskeletal diseases</p>                 |  |  |



## SEOUL

### Itaewon

- ☪ 3 Alley Pub
- ☪ All American Diner
- ☪ Amigo
- ☪ Bar Bliss
- ☪ BBB Korea
- ☪ Berlin
- ☪ Bistro Praha
- ☪ Brick
- ☪ Bungalow
- ☪ CasAntonio
- ☪ Cold Stone Creamery
- ☪ Copacabana
- ☪ Cup & Bowl
- ☪ Don Valley
- ☪ Flying Pan
- ☪ Gecko's Garden
- ☪ Gecko's Terrace
- ☪ Gobble n' Go
- ☪ Healing Hands
- ☪ Hollywood Grill
- ☪ Hillside
- ☪ Holy Chow
- ☪ International Clinic
- ☪ Itaewon Global Center Village
- ☪ La Bocca
- ☪ La Cigale Montmartre
- ☪ Loco Loca
- ☪ Meili's Deli
- ☪ Moghul
- ☪ My Thai
- ☪ Nashville
- ☪ Neal's Yard
- ☪ Old Stompers
- ☪ Pattaya
- ☪ Quiznos
- ☪ Rocky Mountain Tavern
- ☪ Santorini
- ☪ Seoul Club
- ☪ Skywellness Chiropractic
- ☪ Smokey Saloon
- ☪ Solution
- ☪ Sortino's
- ☪ Taco Amigo
- ☪ Tony's Aussie Bar
- ☪ What The Book
- ☪ Wolfhound
- ☪ Zelen

### HBC, Kyungridan & Yongsan-gu

- ☪ Buddha's Belly
- ☪ Chakraa
- ☪ Chili Chili Tacos
- ☪ Craftworks
- ☪ Green Banana
- ☪ HBC Gogitjib
- ☪ Hillside Pub
- ☪ Hwang Mi Seo foot care
- ☪ Istanbul
- ☪ Itaewon Animal Hospital
- ☪ Jacoby's
- ☪ Jamba Juice
- ☪ Latte King
- ☪ Lazy Sue
- ☪ Le Vert
- ☪ Naked Grill
- ☪ Phillies
- ☪ Phillies Steak
- ☪ Res2Go
- ☪ Standing Coffee

- ☪ TG Brunch
- ☪ Thunder Burger
- ☪ Yongsan Recycle Center
- ☪ Yoons' Oriental Clinic
- ☪ Café JeJe
- ☪ Dojo
- ☪ Noxa Loung

### Gangnam, Sinsa & Chungdam areas

- ☪ AOC
- ☪ Baram plastic surgery
- ☪ Big Rock
- ☪ California Pizza Kitchen
- ☪ CK Chiropractic
- ☪ Dos Tacos
- ☪ Dublin Irish Pub
- ☪ Dunhill
- ☪ Hushu dental & skin clinic
- ☪ Jaseng Oriental Hospital
- ☪ Nova Skin Clinic
- ☪ Once in a blue moon
- ☪ Smart Dental Clinic
- ☪ TengTeng Skin Clinic
- ☪ Yonsei Mi Dental Clinic

### Konkuk University

- ☪ Café 4B
- ☪ Monomo

### Hongdae & Sinchon

- ☪ aA museum café
- ☪ Agio
- ☪ Beer O'clock
- ☪ Castle Praha
- ☪ Dos Tacos
- ☪ Hair & Joy
- ☪ Mike's Cabin
- ☪ On The Border
- ☪ Tin Pan
- ☪ Yonsei Mi Dental Clinic
- ☪ Zen Art Center

### BUNDANG & YONGIN

- ☪ Underground
- ☪ Batman bar
- ☪ Travelers

### BUSAN

- ☪ Basement
- ☪ Breeze Bum's
- ☪ Fuzzy Navel (Haeundae)
- ☪ Kino Eye (Daeyeon-dong)
- ☪ Mojo (Jangjeon-dong)
- ☪ Rock N Roll (Bujeon-dong)
- ☪ Taco Family (Jangjeon-dong)
- ☪ The SKOOL (Woo-dong)
- ☪ Wolfhound (Haeundae)

### DAEGU

- ☪ Dijon
- ☪ The Holy Grill

### INCHEON

- ☪ Fog City International Cafe

## DAEJEON

- ☪ Cantina

## ILSAN

- ☪ Big Bread
- ☪ Yonsei Joshua Clinic

## JEONJU

- ☪ Jeonju English Center

## JEJU

- ☪ Zapata's (Jeju city)
- ☪ Jeju tourism offices

## CHUNGJU

- ☪ Road King

## FRANCHISES

- ☪ Starbucks
- ☪ Dos Tacos
- ☪ Jamba Juice
- ☪ California Pizza Kitchen
- ☪ HBC Gogitjib
- ☪ Breeze Bum's
- ☪ Wolfhound
- ☪ Cold Stone Creamery
- ☪ Quiznos

## GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- ☪ Incheon International Air Ports
- ☪ Kimpo Airports
- ☪ Korea Tourism Organization
- ☪ Seoul City Hall
- ☪ Daegu City Hall
- ☪ Gangnam-gu Tourism Office
- ☪ Seoul Global Center
- ☪ TBS eFM station

## HOTELS

- ☪ Lotte Hotel Seoul
- ☪ Lotte Hotel Busan
- ☪ Grand Hilton
- ☪ Novotel Ambassador Gangnam
- ☪ Westin Chosun Hotel
- ☪ Grand Hyatt Hotel Seoul
- ☪ Somerset Palace Seoul
- ☪ JW Marriott Hotel Seoul
- ☪ Astoria Hotel (Myung-dong)
- ☪ Hamilton Hotel
- ☪ Novotel Ambassador Busan
- ☪ The Ritz-Carlton Seoul
- ☪ Millennium Hilton
- ☪ Oakwood Premier Coex Center
- ☪ Han Suites Serviced Residences
- ☪ Hyatt Regency Incheon
- ☪ The MVL (Yeosu)
- ☪ Hotel Inter-Bulgo (Daegu)
- ☪ Sea Cloud Hotel Busan
- ☪ InterContinental Alpensia Resort (Pyeongchang)

## HOSPITALS & HEALTH CLINICS

- ☪ Lee Moon Won Oriental Clinic (Chungdam-dong)
- ☪ Seoul National Univ. Gangnam Health Center (Yeoksam-dong)
- ☪ Gangnam Severance Hospital (Dogok-dong)
- ☪ Wooridul Spine Hospital (Chungdam-dong)
- ☪ MizMedi Women's Hospital (Daechi-dong)
- ☪ Samsung Medical Center (Ilwon-dong)
- ☪ NOVA Skin Clinic (Gangnam stn)
- ☪ Oracle Skin Clinic (Gangnam stn)
- ☪ UPennlvy Dental Clinic (Ichon-dong)
- ☪ ESARANG Dental Clinic (Gongduk-dong)
- ☪ Yein Dental Clinic (City Hall)
- ☪ A Plus Dental (Shinsa-dong)
- ☪ TUFT Denatal (Samsung-dong)
- ☪ TengTeng Skin Clinic (Shinsa-dong)
- ☪ CK Chiropractic (Nonhyeon-dong)
- ☪ Yonsei Mi Dental Clinic (Hongdae & Shinsa-dong)
- ☪ Healing Hands (Itaewon)

## US ARMY BASES

- ☪ Yongsan Garrison
- ☪ Pyeongtaek Camp Humphreys
- ☪ Osan AB
- ☪ Chinhae Naval Base
- ☪ Daegu Camp Walker

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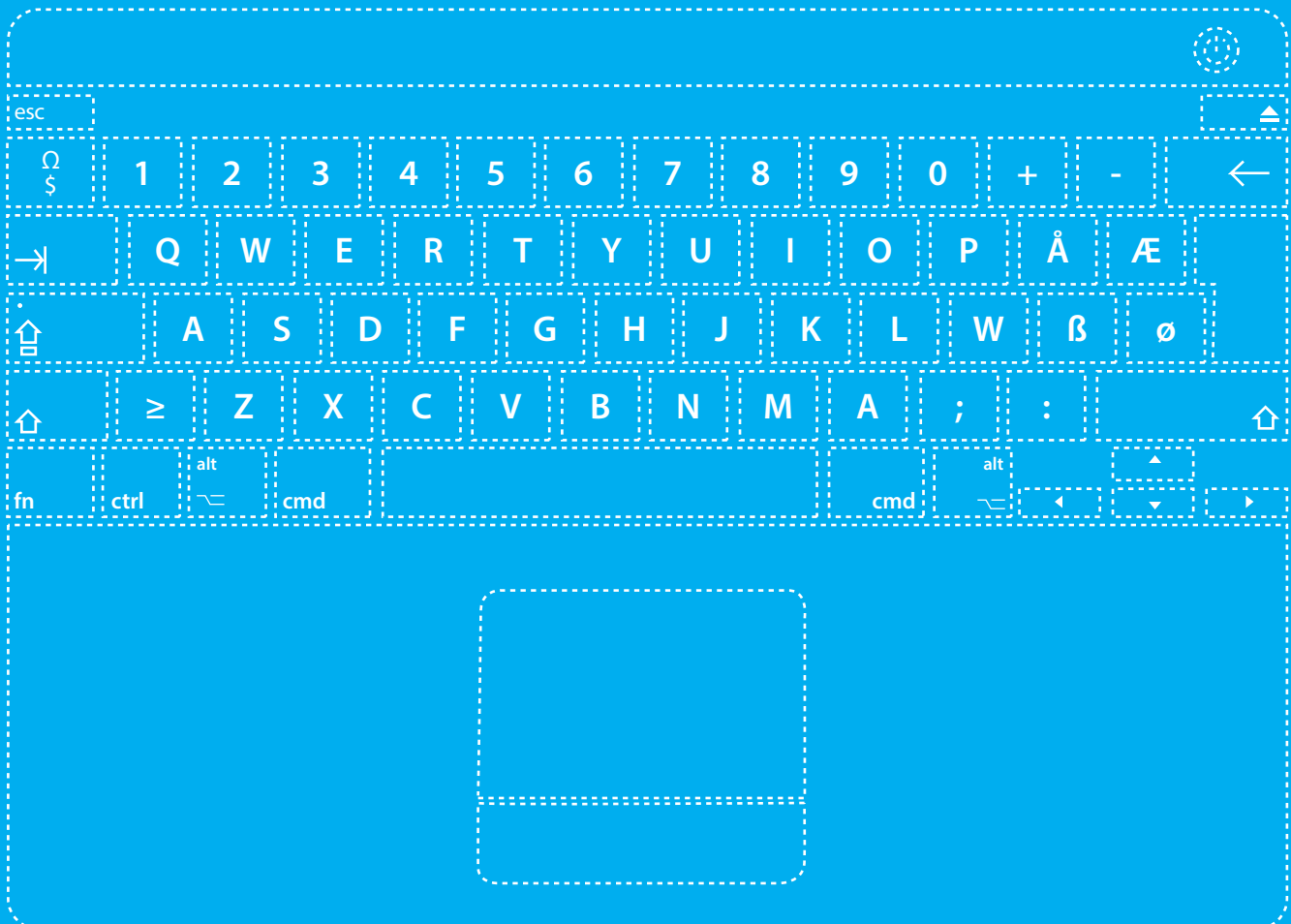
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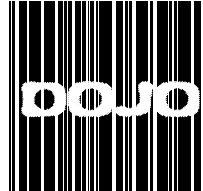




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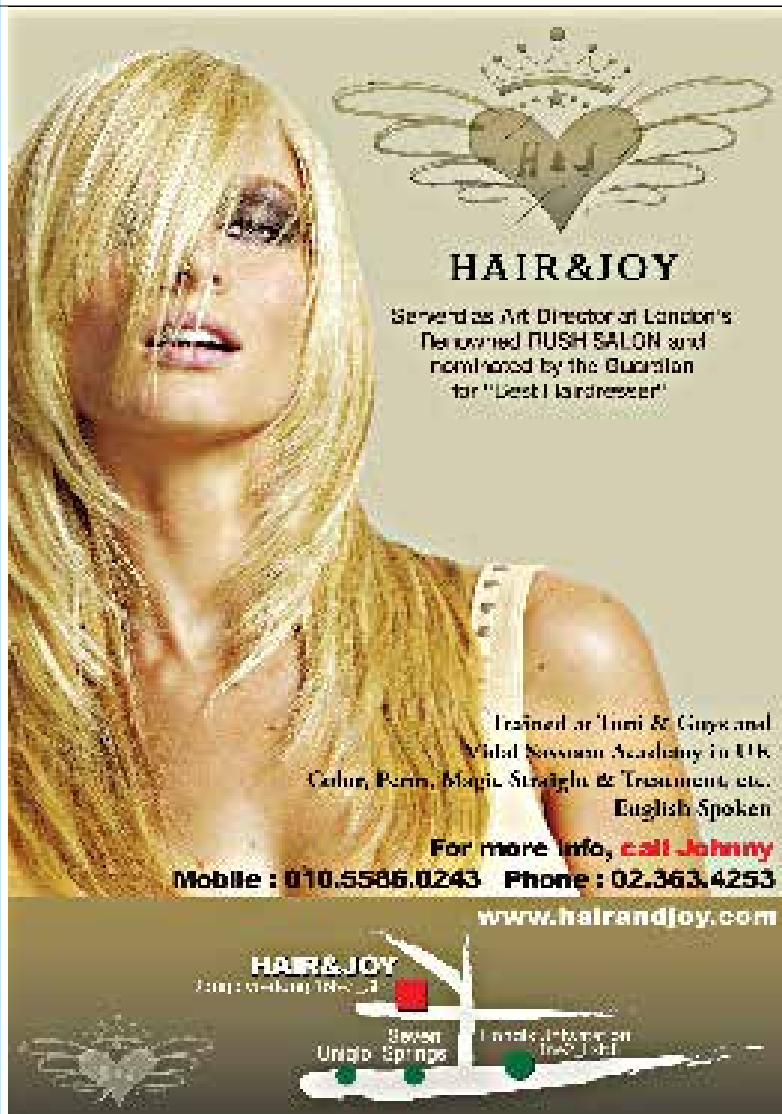


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# Lotte Hotel Busan

Special offer: Sicilian Course

Lotte Hotel Busan offers a very special lunch course — the Sicilian Course — at its Italian restaurant, Wine & Dining.

The course includes herb salads, green olive puree and grilled scallop marinated with eggplant sauce. The main dish is served with your choice of cream pasta with mushroom, bacon, and chive or Sicilian tomato spaghetti with grilled eggplant and basil.

The exquisite lunch meal will enhance your cuisine experience. The freshly served Sicilian course is 30,000 won per person subject to tax.

For reservations and inquiries, contact Wine & Dining at 051-810-6320.



# Novotel Ambassador Busan

Package name: Autumn Package

Enjoy a relaxing time at Novotel Ambassador Busan with their Autumn Package. It includes an Americano coffee and complimentary snacks at the newly opened Terrace Café, as well as a hot spring at Club Esprit. The package also includes a 50 percent discount at Ryan & Lillian, 15 percent discount at Busan Aquarium and Tiffany 21 Cruise.

The package starts at 180,000 won (exclusive of 10 percent VAT and 10 percent Service Tax).

For reservations and inquiries, contact 051-743-1243.



# Sheraton Grande Walkerhill

Special offer: "Fall" into seasonal gastronomy

Two descent and refined oriental restaurants at Sheraton Grande Walkerhill — Myongwolgwon and Kiyomizu — have prepared Dishes for Autumn Gastronomy to introduce to foodies.

Myongwolgwon created a new healthy dish, "Steamed rice in Lotus leaf." Bulgogi with Korean Beef is served as well.

The executive chef of Myongwolgwon, chef Yeom created this exclusive menu for autumn. This will be available until Nov. 30 and priced at 39,000 won (for one person, tax and service charges excluded).

The third generation of traditional Kyoto Cuisine and the executive chef at Kiyomizu, chef Nagatsuma is excited to present his "Autumn Kaiseki Cuisine," authentic Japanese food.

The course menu will be available until Oct. 31, and priced at 100,000 won (tax and service charges excluded).

For inquiries and reservations: (02) 450-4595 (Myongwolgwon), (02) 450-4599 (Kiyomizu).



# Grand Hilton Seoul

Package name: Autumn Ladies Package

The Grand Hilton Seoul, located in Hongsun-dong, unveiled two special overnight packages just for the ladies this fall season. The Autumn Ladies Package I (199,000 won/exclusive of tax and service charges) offers one night in a three-bedroom unit at the Grand Suite serviced residence. It includes a kitchen and living room. The suite can accommodate up to four guests. The Autumn Ladies Package II (219,000 won/exclusive of tax and service charges), catering to groups of up to six persons, offers guests one night in a four-bedroom Grand Suite unit.

The Autumn Ladies Packages are designed to provide a true girl's night out, where guests can share a relaxing evening with friends and acquaintances over a glass of wine.

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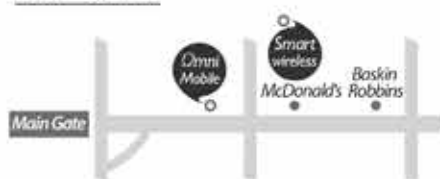


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